THE SENATE'S NEW FEMINIST CONSCIOUSNESS

JULY 12, 1993 · $1.95

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A PLEA FOR HIGHER DIMENSIONS

JIM HOLT

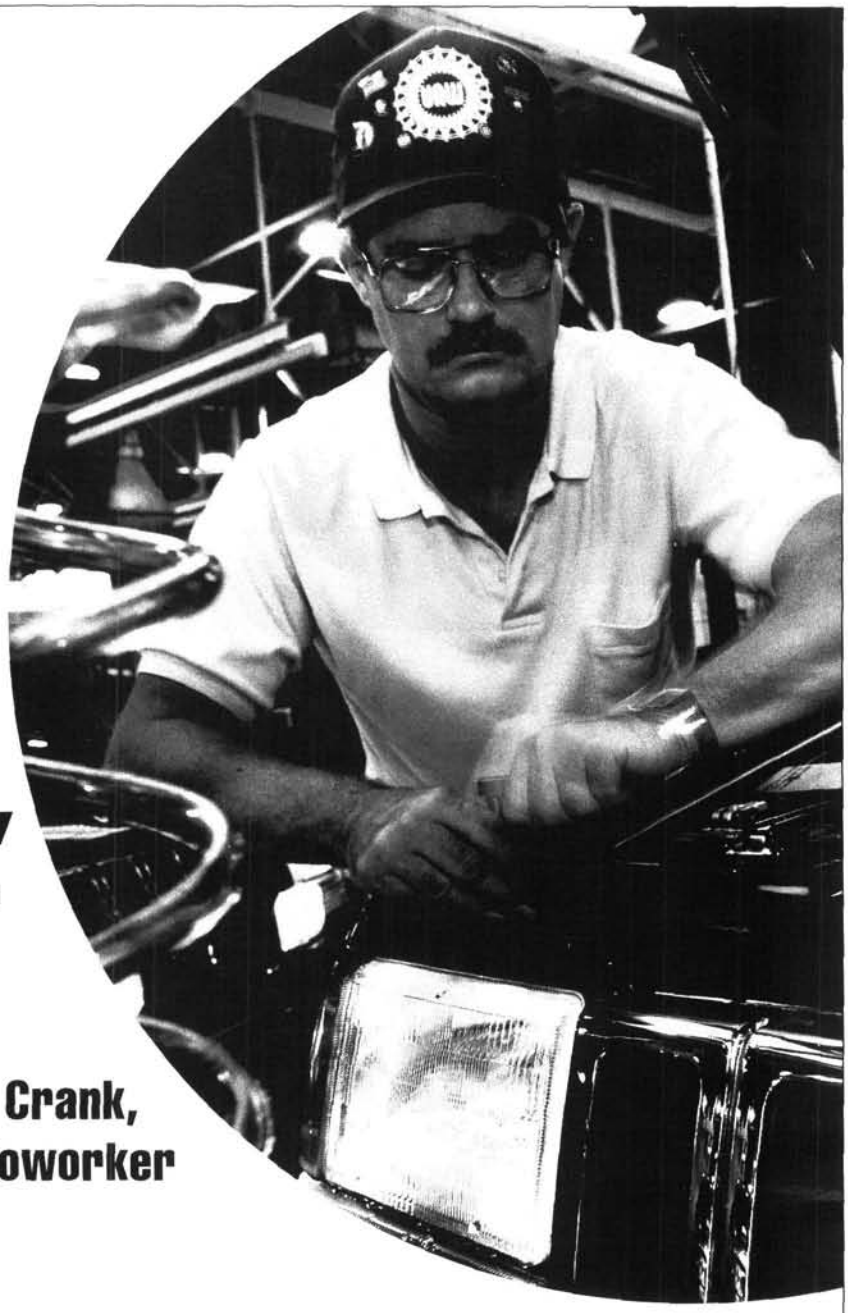
COUPLAND

#BXBKDML******5-DIGIT 94301
#94301UZZ55SBY003# NWRE 255
RON K UNZ
555 BRYANT ST #371
PALO ALTO CA 94301-1700
CNR
DIR
022894

49140
0 787445 1

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

'We're turning things around.'



— David Crank,
American Autoworker

"Change can be tough. But in the last 10 years, we've learned a lot. Today, we use everybody's talents—workers and managers. We've learned we've got to beat the rest of the world in design and quality. And we are.

The men and women of the UAW are part of the change in this industry that's making America a leader again. We're working for jobs we can depend on to support our families and communities, good health care and a secure retirement. That's what it takes to build great cars—and a stronger America."

The men and women of the UAW

Working hard to build great cars... and a stronger America

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Weekly Journal of Opinion

JULY 12, 1993

FOUNDED 1914
WASHINGTON, D.C.
ISSUE 4,095

Editor-in-Chief and Chairman
MARTIN PERETZ

Editor
ANDREW SULLIVAN

Literary Editor
LEON WIESELTIER

Executive Editor
DAVID SHIPLEY

Senior Editors
FRED BARNES, ANN HULBERT, MICKEY KAUS, MICHAEL KINSLEY, MICHAEL LEWIS, JACOB WEISBERG, ROBERT WRIGHT

Managing Editor
WESTON KOSOVA

Editor, New Republic Books (Basic Books)
PETER EDIDIN

Films
STANLEY KAUFFMANN

Theater
ROBERT BRUSTEIN

Poetry
MARY JO SALTER

Art
MARK STEVENS

Legal Affairs
JEFFREY ROSEN

Dance
MINDY ALOFF

Contributing Editors
ELIOT A. COHEN, ROBERT COLES, STANLEY CROUCH, JAMES K. GLASSMAN, ANNA HUSARSKA, JOHN B. JUDIS, MORTON KONDRACKE, CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER, VINT LAWRENCE, LOUIS MENAND, ADAM MICHNIK, JONATHAN RIEDER, ROGER ROSENBLATT, MAGGIE SCARF, ROBERT SHAPIRO, RONALD STEEL, E.V. THAW, TOM TOLES, TATYANA TOLSTAYA, MICHAEL WALZER, DOROTHY WICKENDEN, C. VANN WOODWARD

Associate Managing Editor
LEONA HIRAOKA

Design Coordinator
ERIC BAKER

Editorial-Corporate Coordinator
LAURA E. OBOLENSKY

Assistant to the Editors
JUNE HALEY

Assistant Literary Editor
ALEXANDER STAR

Production Director
BRUCE STEINKE

Assistant Production Manager
ANGELINA HAN

Copy Editor
AMY E. KNOX

Reporter-Researchers
PETER BEINART, DANIEL CHOI, HANNA W. ROSIN, RUTH SHALIT

President
JEFFREY L. DEARTH

Publisher
JOAN M. STAPLETON

Associate Publisher-Marketing
PAUL J. VIZZA

Associate Publisher-Circulation
PEGGY JARVIS FERRIN

Controller
JEAN GANDY

Acting Advertising Director
LISA THOMAS

Director of Joint Advertising Sales
JAMES J. McCABE

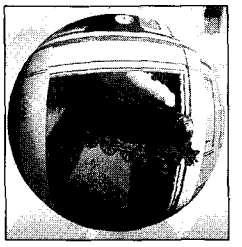
Accounting Manager
CHRISTINA R. OVERHOLSER

Circulation Manager
CECELIA M. STEPHENS

Advertising Assistant
DIANE M. SEBOLD

Accounting Assistant
JACQUELYN M. PASCALE

Back Issues and Reception
CAROLYN PARHAM



Cover by Jim Holloway for THE NEW REPUBLIC, with apologies to Magritte. Articles on pages 20 and 22. Illustration on page 9 by Ross MacDonald.

4 **CORRESPONDENCE** The Question in Bosnia, defending David Owen &c.

6 **MICKEY KAUS** TRB: MODERATE THREAT Ruth Ginsburg's convenient caution.

7 **THE EDITORS** DECENT PROPOSAL The case for imperfect campaign finance reform.

8 **NOTEBOOK** The Kurds up against it, Clinton's non-comeback &c.

9 **ERIC SCIGLIANO** CONSUMED: HIP HOPS Beer, the complex beverage.

10 **RICHARD HOWARD** ALMOST CLASSIC The moral solipsism of Harold Brodkey.

11 **JOSHUA HAMMER** LAGOS POSTCARD: JAMMED And you thought I-95 was bad.

12 **RUTH SHALIT** ON THE HILL: CAUGHT IN THE ACT What do Bob Packwood, Edward Kennedy and Daniel Inouye have in common? The Violence Against Women Act.

15 **ERIC KONIGSBERG** SALLIE MAE'N'T How lobbyists killed a Clinton reform.

16 **JOHN B. JUDIS** THE FOREIGN UNPOLICY Has Clinton reversed an era's wisdom?

20 **DOUGLAS COUPLAND** GUIDE TO THE FIVE DIMENSIONS From Lucky to Mr. Gergen.

22 **JIM HOLT** THE NEWER PARADIGM With the millennium approaching, a serious re-evaluation of higher dimensions is a pressing task, the author argues.

26 **STANLEY KAUFFMANN** ON FILMS: MONSTERS AND MASTERS The *Jurassic Park* thing.

27 **STEPHEN OWEN** ROOMS OF HIS OWN *Freer: A Legacy of Art* by Thomas Lawton and Linda Merrill

31 **STANLEY HOFFMANN** US AND THEM *On Human Diversity: Nationalism, Racism and Exoticism in French Thought* by Tzvetan Todorov

34 **CHRISTOPHER MAURER** THROUGH A VERSE DARKLY *Trilce* by César Vallejo, translated by Clayton Eshleman; *Trilce* by César Vallejo, translated by Rebecca Seiferle

38 **JUDITH BAUMEL** POEM *Custard of the Pawpaw*

39 **SAMUEL HYNES** SEX IN THE HEAD *Ottoline Morrell* by Miranda Seymour

42 **FRED BARNES** WASHINGTON DIARIST: QUANTITY TIME

THE NEW REPUBLIC, Vol. 209, Number 2, Issue 4,095, July 12, 1993. (Printed in the U.S. on June 23, 1993.) Published weekly (except for combined issues dated Jan. 4 & 11, July 19 & 26, Aug. 23 & 30, and Sept. 20 & 27, 1993) at 1220 19th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone (202) 331-7494. The New Republic/National Review joint advertising (212) 702-4882. Yearly subscriptions, $69.97; foreign, $99.97; Canada, $84.97. Back issues, $3.50 (includes postage & handling). © 1993 by The New Republic, Inc. (ISSN 0028-6583). Second-class postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices. Indexed in Readers' Guide, Media Review Digest. Microform, CD-ROM, issue and article copies are available through University Microfilms Intnl., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Telephone 1-800-521-0600. Internet mail address: TNR@aol.com. Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. Unsolicited manuscripts can be returned only if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Subscribers: Please send all remittances, changes of address, and subscription inquiries to Subscription Service Dept., The New Republic, P.O. Box 602, Mount Morris, IL 61054. For subscription problems call 800-827-1289.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

The Question

To the editors:

John Mearsheimer and Robert Pape's partition plan for Bosnia may or may not be "The Answer" (June 14). Whatever the answer may turn out to be, though, I'm certain it will take at least some U.S. ground troops to enforce it—even if they are called "advisers." And some of them will get killed.

Which takes me back to your editorial of June 7 ("Good Cop, Good Cop"). Why is it that "no democratic nation will stomach the loss of many lives in a war it views with detachment"? Wasn't the all-volunteer army supposed to get us around the problem of having to make our wars universally popular? Obviously, it hasn't.

You touch on one solution—a standing U.N. army—but dismiss it as, for now, "utopian." I agree. Another possible solution is to organize national forces made up of soldiers who volunteer for the mission. Such "special expeditionary forces" could be organized around a core of career soldiers who volunteer, for example, to serve in Bosnia to enforce a partition plan. If necessary, they could be supplemented by new recruits who join the military specifically for the mission. Recruiting real volunteer armies will allow democratic governments a freer hand to employ military force in pursuit of just foreign policy goals.

The advantage, in political terms, is obvious. I would never want to lose a son or daughter in a war, but I would object much less if I knew he or she chose to be there. Indeed, I would volunteer to fight against genocide in Bosnia myself, if the military would take me at my age (42) and let me go home after a year. And I think many other people would feel the same. There is a precedent. During the Spanish Civil War, the International Brigades recruited thousands of volunteers to fight for the besieged Republic.

BRUCE S. SCHWARTZ
Cherry Hill, New Jersey

To the editors:

John Mearsheimer and Robert Pape's answer to the Bosnian question is a little questionable. First, there will be no peace in Bosnia until all parties desire it. I'd reckon that arming the Muslims is more likely to induce them to fight than to negotiate for peace. Furthermore, the Serbian motive for war is and always has been to partition Bosnia along ethnic lines. The attendant carnage is merely a means to an end. Should we really encourage sociopathic nationalists to commit televised atrocities and shame us into sanctioning their goals? If so, partition Bosnia. Unfortunately, the United States must come to grips with our existential angst and admit that the best we can hope for is that Bosnia will provide the Balkans, as well as the rest of the world, with a vivid example of the true cost of intolerance.

The authors correctly remind us that Bosnia's geography and demographics lend themselves quite nicely to a Vietnam-style conflict. Their "answer" then has the United States arming a combatant and sending 200 to 400 advisers into the fray. Am I the only one who can see the irony in that suggestion?

DAVID ALBANESE
Stamford, Connecticut

Gourmet aroma

To the editors:

The theme of the American Cause conference ("Cause Célèbre" by Stephen Rodrick, June 7) was "winning the culture war." Patrick Buchanan's whole point in organizing the event was to illuminate non-legislative and non-political means by which traditionalists of all stripes can struggle to preserve their own values and pass them on to their children. The focus was on education and the arts—with a strong emphasis on the flaws in previous traditionalist reactions to avant-garde culture. The award-winning British epic poet Frederick Turner suggested that traditionalists turn away from puritanical nit-picking attacks on the Mapplethorpes and Serranos of this world and spend their time seeking out and encouraging artists who "express, however fitfully, the presence of a living—not a dead—God." It was this openness toward real creativity that moved the classical scholar Dr. Thomas Fleming to defend Martin Scorcese as "one of the truly great artists of our time." Fleming recommended that conservatives "seek out and befriend such people," rather than blister them with philistine abuse. And so on. Much of the weekend consisted of a kind of "examination of conscience" about why the right has failed to counteract the left in its "long march through the institutions."

Maybe Rodrick was out of the room—scarfing croissants, looking for (in his words) "rednecks" to coax into racial comments or "housewives" whose hairstyles were somehow risible—while Samuel Francis discussed the importance of Gramsel, or while National Cathedral sculptor Frederick Hart and

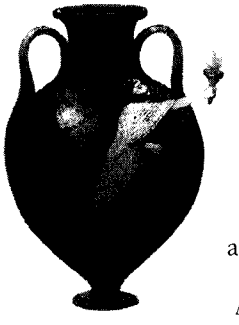
THE OLDEST DEAD WHITE EUROPEAN MALES

And Other Reflections on the Classics

Bernard Knox's

"supremely lucid and elegant"* new book

"One of the field's great scholars" (*Boston Globe*) brings his immense learning to bear in helping us remember the astonishing originality and inventiveness of the ancient Greeks—"the oldest dead white European males." As Garry Wills writes, "the Greeks are not buried in the past...



They lie in wait for us around the next corner — as Bernard Knox, always scouting ahead, can signal to us." Michael Grant, author of *The Visible Past*, adds that "Knox has the rare gift of being able to inform and entertain at the same time." A "brilliant summary." —**The New Yorker*

At all bookstores NORTON 500 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10110

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

one-time sculptor to the Spanish court Hamilton Reed Armstrong debated the value of Romantic realism.

I could go on and on, reporting all the items of interest that didn't appear in Rodrick's piece, or pointing out the trivialities he dwelled on instead. But that would be whining, and I will leave whining to the left. The Requiem Mass I organized to mourn Bastille Day in 1989, I leave undefended—or rather, defended by my betters Burke and de Maistre and Maurras. The mostly calm critique that the Buchananites offered of the "gay rights" lobby and its radical attack on the meaning of marriage can stand on its own.

Rather let me issue a warning. We of the right are dead serious. We believe that American culture is dying, and we plan to do something about it. We will act within the law but outside the mainstream institutions, to pass our beliefs along and to mobilize the common man against the smug and complacent elites who seek to disfranchise him and corrupt his children. Technology is on our side, shattering the hegemony of the Three Networks, the One Newspaper and the public schools. All three institutions are hopelessly discredited outside of a few square miles in Washington, New York and Los Angeles. Once you escape the aroma of gourmet coffee roasting, you can smell the disillusion and rage rising from middle America. To me, it smells like victory.

Yours in Christ the King,

JOHN ZMIRAK
Assistant Editor, Success
New York, New York

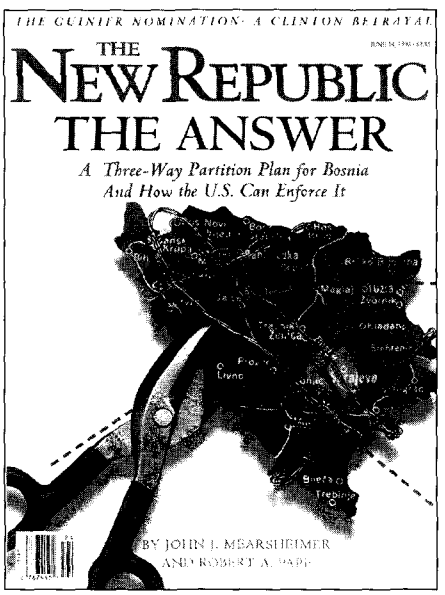
To the editors:

I deplore TNR's editorial policy permitting the use of a pejorative to describe a group of people—in this case, "rednecks"— as Stephen Rodrick did in "Cause Célèbre." I doubt that you would have let the word "nigger" or "faggot" pass the lips of TNR, though I'm not sure about "cracker." What did the word do to advance the reader's understanding of this event (an event that I do not, by this letter, endorse)? Was it the writer's point that only dumb, ignorant people attend such gatherings, thereby denigrating the event? Poor white trash? If put to the task of describing the persons attending the event more artfully than with the shorthand device of using a slur, would Rodrick have been equal to the task, or would he have found himself appearing to look down his nose even more insensitively than he did?

Hopeless and unsophisticated as you might think us, you will find in the Appalachian territory a great number of thoughtful, well-meaning, loving and, yes, even educated persons—at least sufficiently educated to recognize bigotry when we see it. Even those you might consider crude, and therefore deserving of the put-down "redneck," you would find to be scraping harder on the face of the earth for a living than you. You might even find that hewing to some of the base beliefs you disparage is what helps them face their grinding lives.

I hope that as sensitive as you claim to be regarding issues that affect you personally, you would apply the same standard across the board, thereby eliminating such words as "redneck" from the vocabulary of TNR; or use them all. No sense being seen as a hypocrite as well as a bigot.

JACKSON HENNIGER
Logan, Ohio


THE GUINIER NOMINATION: A CLINTON BETRAYAL
THE
NEW REPUBLIC
THE ANSWER
A Three-Way Partition Plan for Bosnia
And How the U.S. Can Enforce It
BY JOHN J. MEARSHEIMER
AND ROBERT A. PAPE

A Great Man

To the editors:

"Of all his principles," Noel Malcolm asserts, "the most important one has always been the advancement of David Owen" ("Lord Fraud," June 14). This statement is wholly irreconcilable with Owen's decision to leave the Labour Party in 1981 for an unknown, and ultimately fateful, future in a new Social Democratic Party. He could have retained his position among the first rank of Labour leadership, as Denis Healey did, by simply lying to himself and everybody else about the party's policies and the dangers they held for Britain. Many less pejorative commentators than Malcolm hold that the Labour Party would never have begun to reverse its leftward lurch without the external pressure of the SDP eating into the core of traditional Labour voters—an effect that helped ensure Labour's electoral defeat in 1983 and 1987, for which we all should be grateful.

Margaret Thatcher once remarked that she wished she had the latitude to change personnel like a soccer manager so that she could "sell Heseltine and buy Owen." Regarding the siting of Cruise missiles in Britain, the brutal coal miners' strike, the Falklands war, American military action in Grenada and Britain's role in Europe, his contributions were intelligent, trenchant, bipartisan and widely respected.

Malcolm's invective is prefaced as "The real story of David Owen." This is a gross misnomer. The real story is well summarized by the late great British commentator Peter Jenkins (in his book *Mrs. Thatcher's Revolution*): "David Owen was the second most dominant figure of the Thatcher era. To have achieved that reputation was remarkable for the leader of a party of half a dozen struggling for survival in the hostile conditions of the British two-party system. Yet by some triumph of the will and with an energy of conviction comparable only to hers, he had played in her league as no one else had done or begun to do."

ANDREW COOPER
Evanston, Illinois

Race-norming in Sri Lanka

To the editors:

It is astonishing that William McGowan's article on the roots of the bloody civil war in Sri Lanka ("Mythconceptions," June 7) nowhere mentions the words "affirmative action." Yet government "set-asides" to Sinhalese businessmen, preferential promotions of Sinhalese in the government bureaucracy and the "race-norming" of test scores for university admissions between the "underrepresented" Sinhalese and the Tamils were widely cited by Tamil activists as among their sharpest grievances. Many of the "disaffected Tamil youth" whom McGowan describes as grist for the terroristic Tigers became disaffected when their higher university entrance scores were overridden by considerations of ethnic "equity," leaving them no path out of Third World misery but the gun.

It is especially disheartening that throughout the '60s and '70s and prior to the outbreak of ferocious race war, Sri Lanka was regularly cited by American proponents of ethnic preferences as a trail-blazing example (along with Yugoslavia!) of the benefits of government-imposed "equity" in education and business. Perhaps the fact that your editorial staff so strongly supported the election of the current administration allowed this curious omission to slip through.

RON K. UNZ
Palo Alto, California

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TRB®

FROM WASHINGTON

Moderate threat

Judge Ruth Bader Ginsburg, we're told, is a "moderate." Indeed, Ginsburg tells us herself. In her now-famous lecture at New York University, she practically foams at the mouth with moderation. An "effective judge," she says, "will speak in 'a moderate and restrained' voice." She wants "dialogue," not "diatribe." Rather than "extravagant and divisive" decisions such as *Roe* v. *Wade*, the courts should take "measured motions," moving "modestly," one case at a time.

Can there be anything wrong with this? If, like me, you think the Supreme Court has abused its anti-majoritarian mandate—and that *Roe* is Exhibit A—then Ginsburg's moderation sounds almost good enough to justify this magazine's spasm of ecstasy at her nomination. (See "Wise Choice," July 5.) If Ginsburg also seems ... well, *boring*, that hardly matters. As Roman Hruska might say, the boring people of America are entitled to be represented on the Court too.

At least that's what I thought before I actually read what Ginsburg has written about *Roe*. Now I'm not so sure. When it comes to judging, there are many species of moderation. One variety reflects a disciplined interpretation of the Constitution. Another reflects mere caution. And yet another can be a lawyer's gambit. Ginsburg is a very good lawyer.

What does Ginsburg say about *Roe*? She points out that in 1973, when the decision was handed down, state abortion laws were being liberalized. Nevertheless, the Court issued an "extravagant" opinion that specified just what restrictions on abortion would be permissible at which stage of pregnancy (with virtually none allowed in the first trimester). Ginsburg approvingly cites Archibald Cox's quip that the decision "read like a set of hospital rules." These rules, she notes, "left virtually no state" with laws liberal enough to satisfy the Court.

Ginsburg suggests she would have done it differently. *Roe*, she points out, tested an extreme Texas law that made abortion a crime unless it was a "life-saving procedure" on behalf of the pregnant woman. Ginsburg would have simply struck down this law, and left open the question of whether less extreme prohibitions (allowing abortions where necessary to promote a woman's "mental health," for example) might be constitutional. This, she implies, would have avoided the "backlash" created by *Roe* (including the "mobilization of a right-to-life movement"). It would have given the "green light for a social change," allowing liberalization in the states to proceed.

Ginsburg would also change the substantive basis of *Roe*. The Court stretched the concept of "privacy" to cover abortion, but Ginsburg clearly prefers to talk about the "equal protection" clause. The "disadvantageous treatment of a woman because of her ... reproductive choice is a paradigm case of discrimination on the basis of sex," she suggests. She thinks this "women's equality aspect" would have made the decision more like the "non-controversial" discrimination cases she herself argued before the Court.

All this second-guessing has alarmed *Roe*'s supporters. But it should also alarm *Roe*'s critics. Ginsburg, after all, does not make any substantive criticism of the decision. She doesn't argue that "privacy" isn't in the Constitution or point out that it's strange to say that "privacy" includes abortion. She doesn't claim the Court usurped what should in principle be a democratic decision. Her argument is entirely result-oriented. She says that if the Court had been more "modest" and deferential it could have achieved the results she wants without all the fuss. There is the nagging suspicion that if the state legislatures refused to play their part in Ginsburg's "dialogue," she would have come up with some less "modest" way to help them "catch up with a changed world." What state law that *Roe* struck down would she actually uphold? She mentions none.

Nor is her equal protection argument for abortion rights a "moderate" theory. This argument has been advertised (in this magazine, among other places) as a way to achieve all the results of *Roe* while avoiding the charge of judicial imperialism. Equal protection, after all, is a concept that (unlike privacy) can actually be found in the Constitution's text. The equal protection theory, it seems, will please feminists, satisfy strict constructionists and cook dinner for twelve. Alas, it does nothing of the sort.

In reality, there are two equal protection arguments. One, advanced by Cass Sunstein in his new book, *The Partial Constitution*, is based on an "admittedly imperfect" analogy. Prohibiting abortion, Sunstein argues, requires women but not men to use their bodies to help vulnerable young beings. For example, men are not required to donate kidneys even when that is the only way to save their children's lives. "It is akin to a law requiring blacks, but not whites, to [make] blood donations."

Sunstein's argument *is* relatively modest. His objection could arguably be satisfied by equalizing the burden—by imposing various physical duties (e.g., to donate blood) on fathers as well as mothers. Nor would his argument do everything *Roe* did. For example, it couldn't easily be used to strike down laws requiring parental notification prior to an abortion.

In any case, Ginsburg doesn't make Sunstein's argument. She claims that anti-abortion laws violate a woman's ability "'to participate equally in the economic and social life of the Nation.'" Here is a constitutional principle with truly immodest implications. It could be used to argue that abortion must be *subsidized* by the state as well as permitted (otherwise pregnancy will impose a "life" handicap on women who can't afford abortions). It could justify affirmative discrimination designed to compensate women for the extra burden of child-rearing. It could even be used to strike down laws that are non-discriminatory on their face but that don't make allowances for women's reproductive disadvantage. (Is the forty-hour week unconstitutional?)

Would Ginsburg buy these arguments? Keep in mind that, if her equal protection theory is going to support *Roe*, she must believe that a woman's "right to full participation in shaping society's course" is powerful enough to trump a fetus's interest in life itself. In fact, Ginsburg strongly implies that she *would* require government funding of abortions—hardly the "moderate" position. She less strongly implies that she would approve affirmative discrimination if it were "adopted for remedial reasons."

But we don't really know. Ginsburg's cautious, case-by-case approach, in this sense, appears less like congenital "moderation" than the option-preserving tactics of a shrewd litigator. Why tip your hand by embracing Principle X in this year's case when it's Principle Y that might win the day for your client in next year's case? Better to plant the "seeds" of various expansive doctrines and harvest them later as needed—a trick Ginsburg openly boasts about pulling off during her litigation career. By being "moderate" today, she frees herself to be immoderate tomorrow.

MICKEY KAUS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NEW REPUBLIC

JULY 12, 1993

DECENT PROPOSAL

For too long, the perfect has been the enemy of the good in campaign finance reform. Common Cause and other public interest groups have spent years drubbing into our heads that it's not enough to diminish the power of money in politics—we must eliminate it entirely. Full public financing of congressional as well as presidential campaigns, they have always maintained, is the only genuine remedy for our ills. Since there has never been sufficient political support for this drastic, doubtful remedy, the country has gone nearly twenty years without any significant electoral reform at all.

The bill passed by the Senate on June 17 falls short of the Naderite ideal. But it is, in fact, a worthy, workable compromise. Like the reforms of the early 1970s, it undoubtedly contains hidden loopholes and will lead to some unforeseen consequences, especially after the courts get done with it. The reform may have to be reformed again in another few years. Even so, it would mean a vast improvement over the current system, under which the cost of congressional campaigns, like that of health care, seems trapped in an upward spiral. The fifty-three Democratic and seven Republican senators who passed the Boren bill deserve much credit, not only for breaking gridlock on an issue where it seemed impenetrable, but for doing what their critics deemed impossible: voting against their own narrow self-interests. And President Clinton deserves applause too, for pressing the Senate to vote yes, and for his willingness to sign a bill that threatens Democratic and Republican incumbents alike.

The core of the bill is an ingenious compromise that has been credited to Nebraska Senator James Exon. The basic structural problem of campaign finance reform is that mandatory spending limits are unconstitutional while voluntary ones are ineffectual. This dilemma has led reformers to focus on direct government support as a way out. But instead of full-bore public financing, which Republicans anathematize as "food stamps for politicians," the Exon compromise substitutes a mechanism whereby candidates receive public financing only if their opponents refuse to abide by voluntary spending limits. This avoids the problem of using public money to create a permanent endowment for Washington's parasitic class of campaign consultants, pollsters and media advisers. It creates financial and moral pressure to follow the non-binding guidelines. It protects those who play by the rules from those who don't. And though the cost depends on the number of candidates who exceed the limits, it would probably be only about $17 million a year for the Senate, and perhaps slightly more for the House.

In other respects as well, the bill represents a pragmatic triumph. Instead of trying to eliminate all the advantages of incumbency, which is impossible, it concentrates on mitigating some of the most unfair ones. Under the bill, incumbents would be prohibited from sending franked mail in years they appear on the ballot. And those who raise money above the limit would be taxed on contributions they receive, and denied benefits such as discounted broadcast time and postal subsidies. There are some other fine ideas in the bill as well: prohibiting lobbyists from donating to candidates, and donors from lobbying; banning the "bundling" of contributions; and forbidding candidates from spending campaign funds on clothes, holidays, golf club memberships and the like.

Of course, the Senate bill is not without flaws. Rules limiting out-of-state contributions may make life harder for minority candidates. The elimination of PAC contributions, which the bill provides for, and the taxation of contributions for those who don't comply with the voluntary spending limits are open to constitutional challenge. And the House may pass a worse bill, or not apply all of the Senate reforms to itself.

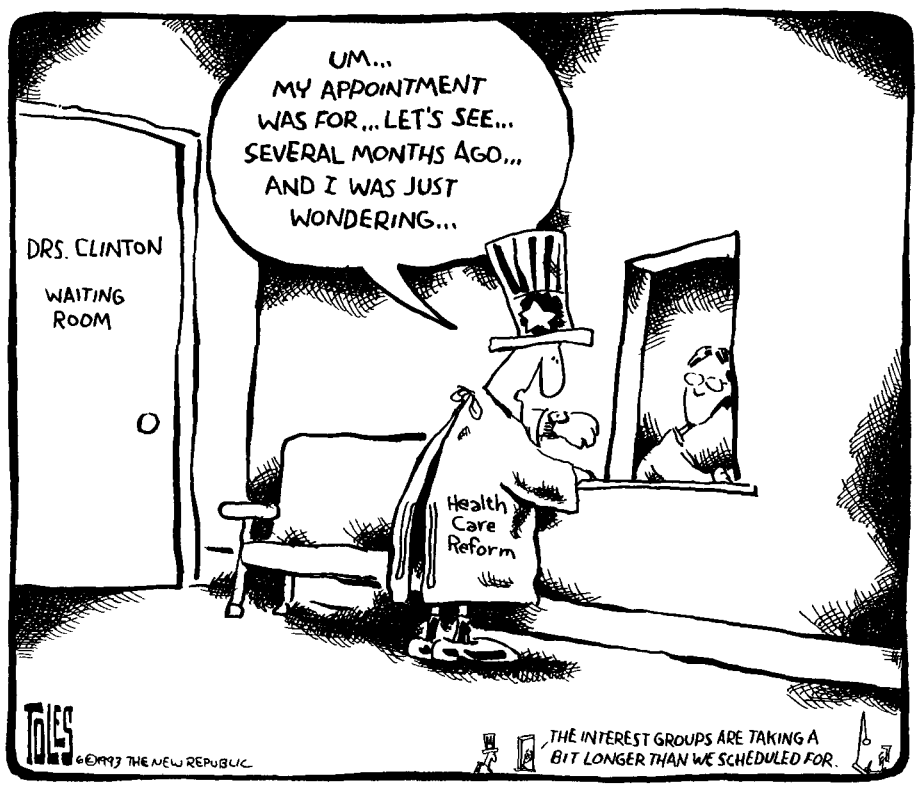
Advocates of pure public financing often point to the Watergate-era reforms, which had among their unanticipated results the explosive growth of PACs, the rise of soft money and the independent expenditure campaign. But they miss the point that despite all these lacunae, those reforms were a vast improvement over the status quo ante. They put in place contribution limits, an effective apparatus for federal financing of presidential campaigns and, most important, a public disclosure requirement. Given the vested interests of the lawmakers who have to pass it, and the vagaries of judicial interpretation, campaign finance will always be a messy, imperfect business, more amenable to gradual improvement than a once-and-for-all legislative remedy. If the Clinton reforms don't work well enough, or as intended, we'll have to try again. But for now, we have reason to be pleased with campaign reform that in effect balances realism with idealism. •

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NOTEBOOK

CLINTONISM WATCH: "The policy ... retains the general principle that homosexuality is incompatible with military service, while accommodating the concerns of those who are able to serve within the unique constraints of military life." —Defense Department memo, detailing a draft proposal to lift and yet not to lift the gay ban

AWAY FOR THE KURDS: When Saddam isn't gassing Kurds, he's bankrupting them. On May 5 Baghdad invalidated its 25-dinar bills, wiping out millions of dollars of assets held outside the country, including most of the Kurdish region's financial reserves. As a result, the Kurdish authorities have no money to pay their farmers for a bumper wheat harvest. *The Washington Post* reports that attempts to free $15 million of available U.S. funds to bail out the Kurds have fallen prey to bureaucratic bungling; and the Kurdish Democratic Party's leader returned from a recent trip to raise foreign money empty-handed. All the while, the very sanctions the U.N. erected against Saddam are continuing to cripple the Kurds' economy. If the president wanted to give a quick, inexpensive burnish to his foreign policy, he could do worse than helping out the Kurds. Once betrayed by the United States and still facing a buildup of Iraqi arms against their border, they would surely appreciate a way to keep their fledgling democratic state alive.


UM... MY APPOINTMENT WAS FOR... LET'S SEE... SEVERAL MONTHS AGO... AND I WAS JUST WONDERING...
DRS. CLINTON
WAITING ROOM
Health Care Reform
TOLES
©1993 THE NEW REPUBLIC
THE INTEREST GROUPS ARE TAKING A BIT LONGER THAN WE SCHEDULED FOR.

REFOULER POUR MIEUX SAUTER: The Supreme Court this week upheld the Bush and Clinton administrations' policy of returning fleeing Haitian refugees to their persecutors without a hearing. We have to admit that John Paul Stevens's 8-1 decision, which turns on an exquisite legalism, is at least plausible. The Immigration and Naturalization Act says that "the Attorney General shall not deport or return any alien" without a hearing. Despite this, Stevens concluded Congress didn't intend the act to cover aliens outside the United States because it used a French synonym for return, *refouler*, which means "expel"; and you can't be expelled from a country unless you're already in it. Like candidate Clinton, who had originally denounced the policy as illegal, we were too quick to slight the arguments on the other side. (See "The Prisoners," March 1.) But the fact that the policy is not illegal doesn't mean it's defensible. Now that Clinton can no longer hide behind the Court, his best reaction to the decision would be to lift the policy voluntarily.

OH, THAT'S ALL RIGHT, THEN: "When I spoke of the state of Israel and I said that Israel has not had any peace in forty years and she cannot have any peace because there can be no peace structured on lying, thievery and injustice and using God's name as a shield for your dirty religion, I never mentioned Judaism nor did I have Judaism in mind. But, I can understand, based upon the words and the context, that it could be deduced that I was condemning Judaism. That I will accept and that is my mistake." —Louis Farrakhan (from a June 28 *Newsweek* interview)

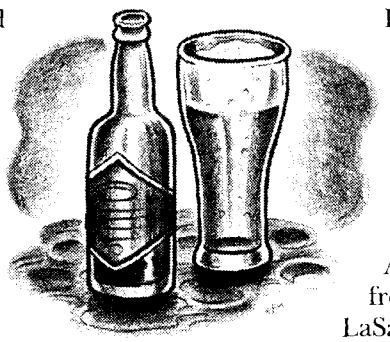
SIMILE CLINIC: "The Bush administration on domestic affairs was like a boat that was perfectly trimmed, fore and aft, with the captain dressed to the nines. But it never left the dock. The Clinton administration, it is now becoming clear, is like a boat headed out to sea, dragging its anchor, with half the passengers seasick and several of the crew having fallen overboard. There's constant trouble in the mate's mess, and the captain is navigating by the stars, having long ago lost his charts. But by gosh, it is forging along. Hang onto your deck chairs, folks..." —Thomas Friedman, *The New York Times*, June 20 •

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

HIP HOPS

By Eric Scigliano

Don't get me wrong. I think fancy craft beers, so-called "microbrews," are one of the nicest holdovers from '80s yuppie consumptionism. They're even one of the most pleasant fixtures of life in the very pleasant place where I live—Seattle, the epicenter of craft brewing and beer connoisseurship. My qualms have nothing to do with the brewers, as conscientious a guild as you'll find anywhere. They perform a critical service: out here, we want a downer as tasty and glamorous as our caffè uppers. On the supply side, the same characteristic genius for trend-setting in Microgrungeland lies behind our hops and coffee brewfests.



But that's what gives me pause. After eleven years gratefully quaffing the fruits of the "microbrew revolution" (they really do call it that), I'm still trying to reconcile its tangled elements of homespun authenticity and trendy simulation. Yes, it's a glorious revolution—but every once in a while, here at Revolution Central, the new boss starts looking more and more like the old one.

The usual brief against gourmet beer is that it's a travesty to make a refined connoisseur's potion out of the robust workingman's brew. And there is something a little disconcerting about tastings, fan journals and gold medals dedicated to *beer*. (It should come as no surprise that the glamming of the brew closely follows the upscaling of wine in America in the 1960s and '70s. In fact, former wine promoters, spotting a wide-open market for beer, led the way.) That beer writing seems to have borrowed much of its vocabulary from wine criticism adds to the discomfort; the leading British beer writer, Michael Jackson, describes the two-fisted ales that a quirky Scots-Canadian named Bert Grant brews in Yakima as "assertive," "idiosyncratic" and "appropriately more attenuated," with a "palate ... underpinned by a dash of honey and dried, again, by hefty hopping."

Still, it's all true. As simple as beer's ingredients are, their fermentation produces an almost limitless range of flavors and aromas. And it's a lot cheaper to sample these in beer—which lacks vintages, doesn't age well and so can't become collectible—than in wine. It's also patronizing to presume Joe Sixpack can't have that fun, or at least have a fresh, flavorful beer instead of mildly alcoholic soda pop. Snobbery is a matter of where as much as of what. In Italy, where wine is cheap and universal, British ales are chic and pricey. In Britain, those ales are the traditional workingman's pint, while young trendies flock to bland Euro-lagers. Truth is, as microbrews become ubiquitous around Seattle, they're breaking the class barrier just as espresso has. Four in five local taverns, blue-collar and trendy alike, now pour at least one or two such brews; many keep five on tap, and a few have ten or twenty.

The microbrews' success rests on the same principle as the espresso boom: both are affordable luxuries. Can't afford the right house, car, education or European vacation? For a few extra quarters, you can enjoy a cappuccino just like you'd get in Trastevere, or a pint as good as any in Burton-on-Trent. Only the names give the game away. They mark the points of a fantastic commercial, mythic and literal geography: Pyramid Pale Ale, Snowcap Ale and Sphinx Stout; Hale Ale's Celebration Porter, wintertime Wee Heavy, summer Cascade Mist and O'Brien's Harvest Ale, plus his Moss Bay Amber, Extra and Stout; the California and Alaska Street Brewery's Alki Ale, Junction Gold, Hi-Yu Brown Ale, Admiral E.S. Bitter, Vashon Old Stock and Fauntleroy Stout; Maritime Pacific Brewing's Nightwatch Ale, Flagship Red, Islander Pale, Navigator Dark, Bosun's Black, Clipper Gold Wheat and Windjammer Dark Wheat; Prime Time Pale, Coal Creek Porter, Atlas Amber, Bhagwan's Best India Pale Ale and Washington Wit Wheat Bière from the Big Time Brewery and Alehouse; LaSalle Hotel Old Bawdy Barleywine from the Pike Place Brewery. And on and on, more than 100 brews from nineteen Washington craft brewers and brewpubs.

Contrived as they sound, some are really happy-go-lucky operations. And, oddly enough, the most outlandish names are the ones most grounded in reality. Maritime Pacific is located by the fishing boatyards and diesel-motor shops of Salmon Bay. Alki, Admiral, Vashon, Fauntleroy and the Junction are streets and landmarks in West Seattle, the California and Alaska Street Brewery's insular neighborhood. Mike Hale's brewery is on the Moss Bay waterfront. The LaSalle Hotel, above the brewery, was the old Pike Place Market bordello.

But not far behind the charm lies the motive. The truly authentic brews are no commercial match for Redhook, the only local microbrew whose name *was* contrived for its marketing ring. It even lends itself to spin-offs with immediate brand recognition, like Wheathook, Blackhook Porter, Winterhook seasonal ale. And Redhook, the state's most successful craft brewer, operates with a computerized German-built custom brewhouse as slick as Anheuser Busch's. The result: 50,000 barrels a year in "micro"-sales and a new suburban-campus brewery in the works. Boston Beer,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the country's biggest self-styled "microbrewer," and Pete's Brewing, possibly the fastest-growing, are "contract brewers," which means they don't even brew most of their own beer. They get industrial brewers with extra capacity to brew it while they handle the important part—the marketing.

Not that we care too much. Microbrews are liquid World Beat; we seek the same satisfaction in an ale or altbier as in exotic sounds from Senegal or Bulgaria—a dose of the authenticity that American popular culture (and beer is popular culture) has lost. So what if authenticity itself becomes just another marketing concept? The hop-glamour and the head-hype haven't spoiled the beer—yet.

ERIC SCIGLIANO is an editor at *Seattle Weekly*.

Harold Brodkey's solipsism.

ALMOST CLASSIC

By Richard Howard

Silence, I suspect, is the appropriate response to—if not reproof of—Harold Brodkey's text "To My Readers" in a recent *New Yorker*. How else to contend with such assertions as this: "Underneath the sentimentality and obstinacy of my attitudes are, as you [his readers] might expect, a quite severe rage and a vast, a truly extensive terror, anchored in contempt for you and for life and for everything." But a subsequent coincidence compels comment; on the same day that a *Times* editorial states that by 2000 some 30 million people around the world will be infected with the AIDS virus, the *Times* also publishes an interview with this author (whose announcement of his own infection had been scooped by the *Times* just before the weekly appeared on the stands), an interview of an extremely personal, indeed of a highly idiosyncratic nature.

Though the interviewer, Jeffrey Schmalz, suggests that Brodkey's revelations might cause his friends and colleagues dismay and unhappiness—might participate, that is, in a world of *other people*—Brodkey abruptly counters that suggestion. When Schmalz attempts to interpret the author's remark "the only thing I'm afraid of is this crying stuff" by the query "meaning other people's breaking down?," Harold Brodkey ripostes, "No, me!"; it is his own suffering he is "afraid of." His sense of uniting, or at least of relating, his fate to that of other AIDS sufferers is an eccentric one: "I'd like to give an enormous party in Central Park and invite everybody with AIDS." That such a celebration might not be regarded, by "everybody" invited, as an appropriate festivity is not pursued by Brodkey or by the *Times* interviewer.

The newspaper has its own agenda, one consonant with the recent appearance of its Sunday "Styles of the Times" section, in promoting attention to Brodkey's just-announced infection. The "Home" section of the June 17 *Times* offers, in a box on its front page, three rubrics: Books, Music, Film; the second and the third direct the reader to reviews of a new twenty-five-hour German film and of a performance of *Madama Butterfly* in Central Park (a different entertainment from the one Brodkey proposes). The Books rubric, however, directs readers not to the work under review in the June 17 *Times*, which is *Commager on Tocqueville*, but to "Harold Brodkey, laughing and crying about AIDS" on page 11, where those other reviews are also said to be found.

The books "news" to which the attention of *Times* readers is drawn, then, is that Brodkey has finished about half of his second novel, on which, however, Schmalz reports the author would not resume work until he felt he would live long enough to submit it to a publisher: "I don't want my heart broken by dying in the middle of it," Brodkey says, though other remarks made in the course of the chat suggest that Brodkey's heart might be broken just by dying. "I want Clinton to save my life. I don't understand his hesitation on AIDS."

The rest of the interview, like the text that appeared in *The New Yorker*, is not concerned with literary matters; except that, contradicting his remark on his unfinished novel, Brodkey says, "I find I can function better [knowing the prognosis], I can write.... If my condition was not as final as it is, I don't think I could work. I think I'd be out talking and looking for medicines and diets." It is hard to see how *The New Yorker* text and the interview in the *Times* are not "being out talking"; indeed, contradicting himself yet again, Brodkey suggests to Schmalz that by "coming forward he is somehow helping give a face to the plague of AIDS and another prominent voice for better AIDS care and research," though he asserts, "I am not good at these public-spirited things."

Public spirit is beside the point here. The shade of Allard Loewenstein and the shadow of Larry Kramer are not joined by this author, who is gingerly about the epidemic's issues: "I'd like to do more with helping demythologize AIDS." What he has done is to mythologize Harold Brodkey. His statements in *The New Yorker* and then in the *Times* are so entirely a matter of manipulative hucksterism, of mendacious self-propaganda and cruel assertion of artistic privilege, whereby death is made a matter of public relations and the life remaining to the discontented writer (discontented, that is, with his fame, which is said to be less effective than John Updike's) a process of familiarizing his readers with his individual circumstance, that I can find no better analogy for Brodkey's texts than the scurf of graffiti that now defaces any accessible surface in this city. Both phenomena are forms of an incoherent assertion of presence, the rage of a self-proclaiming *ressentiment*.

As the epidemic of AIDS shifts from its initial situation, when it was perceived as a gay disease, to a plague afflicting women and children as much as other groups some-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

what more marginal, it is dismaying to see gifted writers, especially gifted gay writers, making their sensational (and provincial) pitch on Broadway and in the pages of *The New Yorker* with no acknowledgment, and apparently no recognition, of the extent of the plague, or of its consequences to the whole of humanity. There is a pornography of self-disclosure here that, in the present instance, crosses the line of what is to be silently endured. "Secrecy," Harold Brodkey observes in his chat with Schmalz, "costs more than it's worth." The cost of the publicity he is seeking (and obtaining) is another matter, one paid for by millions of others who are suffering from this plague in silence, in dignity, in despair.

RICHARD HOWARD's latest book of poems, *Like Most Revelations*, will be published by Pantheon next March.

LAGOS POSTCARD

JAMMED

By Joshua Hammer

Impoverished, filthy, steamy, overcrowded and corrupt, Lagos is the ultimate incarnation of the modern megalopolis gone to hell. Chronic strikes cripple everything from garbage collection to the school system. Telephones rarely work. Virtually nothing can be accomplished without a bribe. But perhaps nothing symbolizes the societal collapse here better than the city's traffic jams, what Nigerians call the "go- slow."

Locals point out wryly that the last head of state to be assassinated here, General Murtala Mohammed, was shot while stalled in downtown Lagos traffic. That was in 1976. Since then the congestion has grown progressively worse. The two candidates in Nigeria's June 12 presidential election, which marked the historic surrender of military power to civilian rule (and which the military has threatened to nullify), made improving traffic a key issue in their campaigns. "I've been all over the world, and the stress level in Lagos is the highest I've seen," a Houston oil engineer told me one evening in the lobby of the Lagos Sheraton, recovering from the three-hour commute from his office—a seven-mile trip. I asked if he had any advice for my impending journey into the city. "Bring a bottle of water," he said, "hire a good driver and God help you if you don't have air conditioning."

I discovered what he meant the following morning. On my way to visit a Lagos newspaper two miles from my hotel, I became trapped in an epic go-slow in Lagos's industrial zone. An evening downpour had washed out a thirty-foot section of the road, forcing three lanes of traffic to converge into a single snaking column along the shoulder. Just ahead of me, a steely-eyed businesswoman in a white Mitsubishi sparred with a battered V.W. van trying to inch into her lane. Neither gave in and the confrontation climaxed in a crunch of metal, shouts and more blocked vehicles. Heaps of garbage lay piled along the curb, residue of a month-long sanitation strike. "This city is hell," my driver mumbled. An hour later the go-slow eased. As traffic picked up, we passed a billboard on the side of the road: "The Lagos Government Has Constructed This Road To Make Your Driving Easy."

Bad road maintenance, undisciplined drivers, poor drainage and endemic corruption all contribute to the traffic crisis. Crooked road contractors skim off money that should go into improving the streets. Crooked inspectors approve dilapidated vehicles in exchange for a $10 bribe. But at the heart of the problem is lousy urban planning. The capital's commercial and government offices are concentrated on two densely populated islands on the southern edge of the city—Victoria and Lagos—separated from the mainland by a fetid lagoon. Three bridges connect the islands to the rest of the metropolis (population 12 million or so), hardly sufficient to handle an influx of 70,000 vehicles each morning. As a result, an overheated engine or a closed lane can have apocalyptic consequences: one memorable evening four years ago, before the opening of the Third Mainland Bridge, the Eko Bridge was closed for maintenance, causing a traffic jam that lasted fifteen hours.

Sitting in traffic has become such a permanent feature of life in Lagos that the logjams have given rise to an elaborate "go-slow market"—an army of hawkers who dart through the lanes toting an astonishing variety of merchandise to sell to captive consumers. As I sat stewing in a go-slow on the Eko Bridge one afternoon, I compiled a list of 125 items I could buy just by leaning out my car window. Among them: clocks, cutlery, raincoats, towels, bath mats, water purifiers, underwear, sink strainers, pingpong paddles, Superglue, walkie-talkies, toolboxes, suitcases, yogurt, irons, ironing boards, Cheerios, meat pies, economics textbooks, rat poison, cocktail tables, jigsaw puzzles, aftershave, phones, live chickens, pineapples, lava lamps and outgoing ruler General Ibrahim Babangida's memoirs. I'm told that during Muslim festivals, it's even possible to buy live sheep (they throw the animals in the back seat). The go-slows also support another, more hazardous commerce. Teams of thieves with walkie-talkies prey on drivers in stalled cars, smashing windows and making off with valuables. (Diplomats are especially vulnerable.)

Despite the misery, however, most Lagos drivers wouldn't think of giving up their cars. That would mean missing out on the government's fuel subsidy, a legacy of the late '70s when the country was flush with oil money. It allows Nigerians to buy gas for eight cents a gallon—cheaper than it costs in Saudi Arabia.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Now that petroleum prices have tumbled and overwhelming foreign debt has pushed the country to the edge of bankruptcy, there has been talk of lifting the subsidy. (There has also been talk of a government ban on Nigeria's brisk trade in broken-down used cars, on the grounds that 50 percent of them aren't roadworthy.) But Babangida clearly spelled out the consequences of such a move. "If you touch a subsidy," he was quoted as saying, "you better write your death warrant." For a while, the Lagos government tried an odd-even license plate system to cut traffic flow in half, but many drivers got around that by bribing the motor vehicle bureau for two sets of plates.

People in Lagos have good reason to be so attached to their cars. For those who don't want to drive—or can't afford to—mass transit is painfully scarce. Lagos's most ambitious attempt to alleviate congestion, the Metropolitan Rail Project, or Metroline, fell victim to the country's turbulent politics a decade ago. In 1982 a French consortium contracted with Lagos's civilian government to build the elevated railway, which would have transported 1 million people a day to and from Lagos Island. But the military overthrew the civilians in 1983 and nixed the project. A handful of government ferries and public buses provide sporadic service.

That leaves poorer commuters dependent on unregulated private buses known as *molues*. Badly maintained, jam-packed and frequently operated by drivers under the influence of pot or local moonshine, the buses break down constantly, tying up traffic. They're also dangerous. "We call them swimmers," one Lagos newspaper editor told me, "because they plunge so often into the Lagos lagoon." According to the Federal Road Safety Commission, which has tried unsuccessfully to crack down on them, fifteen have been involved in fatal accidents since January. The worst in Nigerian history happened on February 8, when fifty people burned to death after their bus exploded on the Third Mainland Bridge. (An engine spark ignited a jerrycan of gasoline carried aboard the bus; the panicked driver then parked against the bridge's guard rail, blocking both exits and trapping everyone inside.) *Molue* calamities are greeted with a mix of horror and relish by the Lagos media, which jump at the opportunity to churn out such lurid headlines as THE MOVING MORTUARY and 50 ROASTED BEYOND RECOGNITION.

There isn't much hope that things will improve anytime soon. The road commission is trying new strategies, such as hiring more traffic marshals, tightening safety standards and initiating a Traffic Decongestion Task Force, whatever that is. For the most part, however, Lagos residents dismiss such innovations. They handle their traffic hell with a sense of resignation, a philosophy that is best expressed by a slogan painted on the battered hulks of many Lagos *molues*. "Remember," it reads. "Nothing is a permanent condition."

JOSHUA HAMMER is *Newsweek*'s Nairobi bureau chief.

ON THE HILL

CAUGHT IN THE ACT

By Ruth Shalit

Efforts to fight sexual violence have a central place in the history of feminist aspiration. But many of today's activists want to do more than ensure justice and sensitive treatment for victims. They want to restructure laws and institutions to reflect the view that rape, far from being an individual crime, is a social disease afflicting most men. With a guilt-tripped male Senate falling over itself to demonstrate gender sensitivity, the activists have never had a better chance to codify this new understanding of sexual violence. And they've almost succeeded. An unlikely coalition of activists and politicians have joined forces to support the Violence Against Women Act of 1993, which would enhance penalties for violent crimes "motivated by gender."

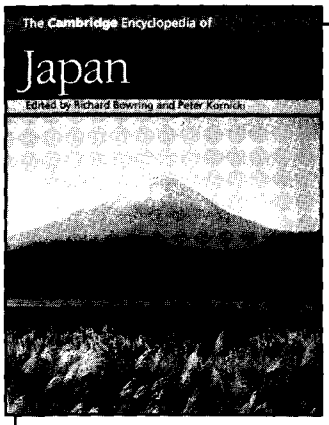
The bill has been heralded by Senator Joseph Biden, its chief sponsor, as "the first comprehensive approach to fighting all forms of violence against women, combining a broad array of needed reforms." But its central reform—turning some rapes into "hate" crimes—is not needed. Its political base in an alliance between feminist absolutism and patriarchal condescension is inherently unstable, and anathema to sound law. By elevating motive over deed, anti-rape activists threaten to subvert their movement's main premise: that rapes are crimes of violence; that no rapes are "better" or "worse" than others.

Biden, who has been lecturing on date rape since 1980, first introduced the bill in 1990, warning his Senate colleagues that it would "change attitudes" and "test our assumptions." Not surprisingly, it never made it to the floor. So to help promote his cause, Biden held four days of hearings, featuring the wrenching testimony of rape survivors. He interviewed experts. His staff even ginned up a sixty-five-page report, "Response to Rape: Detours on the Road to Equal Justice," which portrays the problem as worse than we ever supposed.

This year, thanks to Biden's persistence and the fact that feminism is a hot commodity in Washington, the bill is expected to sail through the Senate. "There was a strong message sent in the last election that women and women's issues were not being addressed in Congress," says Democratic Senator Patty Murray. "That helps passage of bills like this." On May 27 the Senate Judiciary Committee approved the bill unanimously. It is expected to go to the floor sometime in the next few months, buoyed by a bipartisan list of sixty-two co-

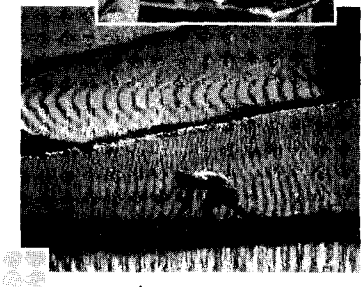
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Essential Reading from Cambridge

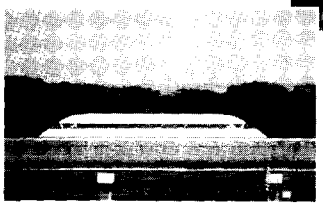


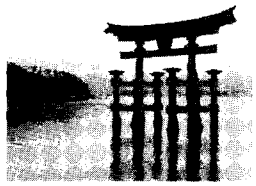
Cambridge Encyclopedia of Japan

Richard Bowring *and* ***Peter Kornicki,*** *Editors*



The essential reference to all facets of Japan past and present. Lavishly illustrated, it is the ultimate source for information on the geography, history, society, economics, culture, and politics of Japan.
320 photographs, most in color 42 maps



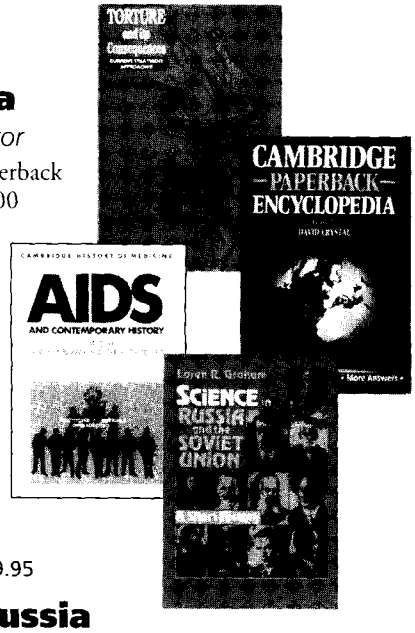


400 pp. 40352-9
Hardcover $49.95

Cambridge Paperback Encyclopedia

David Crystal, *Editor*

The quintessential paperback reference. Nearly 20,000 easy-to-read entries contain essential information on a myriad of topics, including technology, the environment, sports, politics, literature, history, art, music, medicine, geography, and much more.



928 pp. 43762-8
Paperback $19.95

Science in Russia and the Soviet Union

A Short History

Loren R. Graham

"...a splendid work, a breathtaking synthesis that is at once erudite and accessible, illuminating and a pleasure to read."
—Daniel J. Kevles

"Loren Graham's informative history...leaves one wondering how science could function at all....The remaining, very open, question is: How well will a newly freed Russian science survive the removal of the Soviet hand that nourished and battered it?"
—New York Times Book Review

349 pp. 24566-4 Hardcover $29.95

AIDS and Contemporary History

Virginia Berridge *and* ***Philip Strong,*** *Editors*

This timely book explores AIDS as an historic event, analyzing both its historic context and its current political, cultural, scientific, and medical aspects.

296 pp. 41477-6 Hardcover $54.95

Torture and its Consequences

Current Treatment Approaches

Metin Başoğlu, *Editor*

The first comprehensive, scientific examination of the problem of torture worldwide. It covers both medical and socio-political aspects of torture, including problems of political prisoners, refugees, former prisoners of war, victims of organized violence, and Holocaust survivors and their children, as well as torture in particular countries, and international law. An unrivalled source of information, this book is essential for all those involved in human rights issues.

550 pp. 39299-3 Hardcover $95.00

The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Latin America and the Caribbean

Second Edition

Simon Collier, Thomas E. Skidmore, *and* ***Harold Blakemore,*** *Editors*

"An impressive achievement. It is an admirably broad but detailed presentation of the region's evolution and current profile, an attractive and informative book of considerable value to the interested general reader." —Times Literary Supplement

250 photographs, 125 in color 70 maps

480 pp. 41322-2 Hardcover $55.00

Available in bookstores or from

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211
Call toll-free 800-872-7423. MasterCard/VISA accepted. Prices subject to change.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sponsors. "I predict the Senate will pass it unanimously," says Democrat Charles Robb.

But should it? Certainly the bill is not without merit. VAWA would, for example, establish new rules of evidence, limiting the use of a victim's clothing or sexual history in rape trials. It would also finance increased lighting and camera surveillance at bus stops and in parks. The heart of the bill, however, is its civil rights provision, which attempts to create a federal remedy for violent crimes committed on the basis of "an animus based on the victim's gender." Title 3, called "Civil Rights for Women," would make sexual violence a violation of federal civil rights law. "This is the beginning, middle and end of the legislation," says Biden. In reclassifying rape, wife-beating and other gender-based felonies as bias crimes, the provision would write into law the view of rape as a socially embedded institution. "Rape as an expression of male dominance has been tolerated because of our society's sexist attitudes," says Sally Goldfarb of the National Organization for Women's Legal Defense Fund. "One of the advantages of the bill is that it codifies the true nature of rape."

Rape is a horrible crime, whether kindled by sexism or sheer nastiness. But rather than creating new penalties for bigoted thoughts and bad motives, why not put in place the relatively straightforward remedy of stiffening jail sentences for rapists? Part of the problem, says Biden, was Democratic coalition politics. At first, women's groups opposed his effort. "Most of these people are way left," he explains. "We wanted to increase jail terms and they said, 'Hey, that's aimed at black males.'" When he took out the stiffer-sentencing provisions, the women's groups jumped on board.

Biden sees rape as an almost normative condition of female experience. "It's not just garbage cans and alleys," he says. "It's people with standing in the community. It's everywhere." Feminist author Andrea Dworkin, who consulted with Biden's staff on the bill, takes this a step further. "When Joe Biden or other men think about this, they're always acts they would not commit," she says. "They're always thinking about it in ways that exclude them. Whereas we're thinking, they're included." Considering this worldview, it's no wonder the stiffened-sentences provision was tamped down to "a sentencing commission to review offenses." The idea of harsh penalties would undermine the bill's ideological coherence. If rape is less a crime than a social pattern in which all men are implicated, the cultural rationale for punishing those responsible disappears.

Meanwhile, says Biden, "Women are being victimized more and more. And society's doing less and less about it." Never mind Bureau of Justice Statistics that show the incidents of rape per 1,000 women declined 30 percent between 1980 and 1990. For Biden the problem is not so much empirical as philosophical. "I have become convinced," he writes in the bill's preamble, "that violence against women reflects as much a failure of our nation's collective moral imagination as it does the failure of our nation's laws and regulations."

Biden will need considerable imagination to enforce the bill's civil rights provision. While there are rapists who hate women and use the act as a way of expressing their hostility, they are in the minority. According to Richard Felson, a sociologist at SUNY-Albany who has studied motives for sexual coercion, rape has never been successfully correlated with hostility toward women. "Men who commit rape don't have any special attitude toward women," he says. "They're versatile. They tend to commit other crimes, to mistreat people generally."

Civil libertarians, meanwhile, are troubled by the bill's explicit "animus" standard, which seems to permit an inquiry into bigoted thoughts and motives. "There's a big difference between criminal and civil cases for these purposes," notes Andrew Good, a Boston civil defense lawyer. "With a civil case, you face the prospect of a very intrusive investigation of your views. It's, 'Are you or have you ever been a sexist?' This is one of those well-intentioned, god-awful pieces of legislation whose consequences only become apparent when it's too late to get it repealed." Nevertheless, some in the Senate are not too worried. "I'm willing to err on the side the bill comes down on," says Robb. "If it doesn't pass constitutional muster, so be it. I'd rather send a message at this point."

Meanwhile, differences over the scope of the civil rights provision threaten to create rifts in the coalition. To the social constructionists, gender hatred is disclosed in the act of rape itself. "Theoretically, I guess, a rape could take place that was not driven by gender animus," muses Biden. "But I can't think of what it would be." Senator Orrin Hatch, the bill's primary co-sponsor, sees things a little differently. "You can make distinctions," he says. "We're not opening the federal doors to all gender-motivated crimes. Say you have a man who believes a woman is attractive. He feels encouraged by her and he's so motivated by that encouragement that he rips her clothes off and has sex with her against her will. Now let's say you have another man who grabs a woman off some lonely road and in the process of raping her says words like, 'You're wearing a skirt! You're a woman! I hate women! I'm going to show you, you woman!' Now, the first one's terrible. But the other's much worse. If a man rapes a woman while telling her he loves her, that's a far cry from saying he hates her. A lust factor does not spring from animus." Senator Dennis DeConcini, another co-sponsor, agrees with Hatch's interpretation. "With the first example, you have only one major violation," he says. "But with the second example, you have two! What you've got there is two crimes. They're subject to separate determination." Apparently, hating women in general is worse than hating one in particular.

Feminists who worked with the Judiciary Committee in drafting the bill are dismayed at these fumbling legalisms. "That's ridiculous," says Eleanor Smeal of the Fund for a Feminist Majority. "Rape is never an act of lust. Mr. Hatch just doesn't get it." NOW's Goldfarb agrees. Obviously, Hatch and DeConcini will have to be led around by the hand. Their befuddlement, however, points up a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

larger problem. By asking politicians and juries to make difficult distinctions between "terrible" and "much worse" rapes, the gender feminists are in danger of reifying the very value judgments the date-rape movement sought to eviscerate. "There's always that risk," says Dworkin. "That's part of the ongoing struggle and conflict."

Meanwhile, Dworkin claims to be surprised at the bill's popularity in the Senate. "The only possible explanation for it is that senators don't understand the meaning of the legislation they pass," she says. "I expect that the more they understand, the narrower the margin of support will be." She may be right. Most of the bill's co-sponsors seem to view the legislation as merely the latest stop on the road of Anita Hill penance. "Men need to be educated as to what others find offensive," says DeConcini. "They might think it's O.K. to rub somebody's behind. But they need to learn that hey, unless you know that person well enough and you've talked about it, it's not O.K. That's what this is all about." Bob Packwood, Daniel Inouye and Ted Kennedy apparently agree. They've signed on as co-sponsors too. •

Washington lobbying: a case study.

SALLIE MAEN'T

By Eric Konigsberg

It hardly came as a surprise when a platoon of Washington's most powerful banking lobbyists ambushed Bill Clinton last month. The president was planning to cut $2 billion from the federal rolls by eliminating the Student Loan Marketing Association, the quasi-governmental agency that buys federally insured student loans from banks and generates millions for the banking industry. But it wasn't just bankers who were hounding Clinton. Many of the lobbyists on contract to save Sallie Mae have explicit ties to the Democratic Party. With their political connections, the K Street corps managed to dilute the Student Loan Reform Act drastically when it reached the Senate. In the process they bought their clients five years to try to talk the administration out of the plan altogether. The campaign to kill the bill is a case study in the way big-dollar Washington lobbyists can gut a sensible reform.

Founded as a Government Sponsored Enterprise by President Nixon in 1972, Sallie Mae is federally insured against insolvency. But as a private corporation, it appoints its own executives and is a for-profit venture. A very successful one. Essentially, Sallie Mae makes its money buying student loans. Banks lend money to students at below-market rates. The government guarantees the loans and pays interest while the students are in school, and then pays the difference between what the students pay and what the market rates would require. But the number of loans a bank can make is limited by the amount in its capital reserves. So many banks are content to sell their loans to Sallie Mae at a small premium rather than pay the costs of collecting them and tying up their cash. Once a loan is sold to Sallie Mae, the banks are free to make new student loans.

With assets of $47 billion in federally guaranteed bonds, Sallie Mae is able to buy huge numbers of loans. It currently owns about 30 percent of all student loans. Last year Sallie Mae raked in $394 million in profits, making it one of the 100 largest corporations in the United States. According to a study by the General Accounting Office, Sallie Mae's president, Lawrence Hough, was paid more than $2 million in 1991. Its vice president, Albert Lord Jr., made $1.7 million.

But Sallie Mae doesn't restrict itself to student loans. As *The Wall Street Journal* reported recently, its quasi-governmental status enables it to lend money to banks that provide loans for second mortgages, arguing that home equity loans are often used to pay college tuition. It also buys and leases railroad cars and power-generation equipment as tax shelters. White House domestic policy adviser Bill Galston characterizes Sallie Mae's position between the public and private sector as "some sort of twilight zone" that gives it "a major, structural advantage in the market."

Clinton's solution, originally the brainchild of Democratic Senator Paul Simon, would have allowed the government to lend students $15 billion directly, and collect payment through the IRS. This would have saved $2 billion a year in defaults and doubled the size of the average student loan, while allowing more time to pay them off. President Bush rejected a similar idea when his secretary of education, Lauro Cavazos, pitched it in 1990. Why let the government run something the private sector could make money off of? But while Sallie Mae's pleas have a pro-business ring to them, direct lending has its defenders on both sides of the aisle. The initial co-sponsor of Simon's bill, in fact, was Republican Senator Dave Durenberger. Yet there was little opportunity to rally support for Clinton's plan. Sallie Mae lobbyists began breathing down his neck immediately after the election. Last month, speaking at Fenton High School in Bensenville, Illinois, Clinton complained of the lobbying scramble: "No sooner had I even mentioned this system than Congress was deluged with lobbyists." Soon after, *National Journal* reported that "Sallie Mae and its allies seem to have hired every well-connected Democrat in town."

It's true. Sallie Mae and its partners in the student loan industry—Nellie Mae (New England's guaranty agency), Consumer Bankers' Association and local student loan funding corporations (Sallie Mae's state-level counterparts)—joined forces to hire at least seven of the top twenty Washington lobbying firms. David Starr, a former senior staffer for Democratic Senator Howard Metzenbaum, is lobbying Congress for the firm

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of Williams & Jensen, which is working directly for Sallie Mae. Akin, Gump, Robert Strauss's high-powered outfit, is lobbying Congress; Kirk O'Donnell, Tip O'Neill's chief of staff as Speaker of the House, is its point man. Anne Wexler (of the Wexler Group), the one-time domestic policy adviser to President Carter, is doing direct mail and grass-roots lobbying. Manatt, Phelps & Phillips is working on contract for The Money Store, a large student loan bank. Powell Tate, the Washington public affairs firm headed by Jody Powell and Sheila Tate, is on contract to lobby for the Ohio Student Loan Servicing Agency. Patton, Boggs & Blow, another big-time Democrat firm and the once and future home to Vernon Jordan, is working for Nellie Mae. Until last year Sallie Mae also retained Hill and Knowlton, mega-lobbyist Frank Mankiewicz's firm. Mankiewicz dropped the project when the lobbyist chiefly responsible for the account left the firm. Still, he sees no reason not to lobby Clinton. "If the Democratic congressional leaders don't have to support the president, I don't know why the hell Democrat lobbyists should," he says.

To keep up the pressure on the administration and Congress, the lobbyists set up shadow student groups like "Ohio Students for Loan Reform," an organization run by the Cincinnati-based Student Loan Funding Corp. Last month the organization bought ads in school newspapers, posted flyers at colleges across the state urging students to voice their gripes via a 1-800 number and distributed postcards preaddressed to both of Ohio's senators bearing pleas to vote against the measure. A student liaison was even put on their payroll. Two student leaders at the University of Wisconsin were flown to Washington by Sallie Mae and recruited to establish a similar lobbying network in their state.

Predictably, the bill that was eventually worked up and that is likely to be enacted is thick with compromises. According to a senior staffer on the Senate Labor and Human Resources committee, Simon and the bill's other Democratic backers, including Christopher Dodd, Barbara Mikulski and Jeff Bingaman, backed off rather than chance seeing the bill killed. "It seemed too risky [to hold out], especially because it would give all the lobbying interests more time to work the senators," said Committee staffer Bob Shireman. "They would only have had to pick off four or six Democrats. So, they watered it down." The bill (which passed in committee by a 15-2 margin) will allow, on a trial basis, for direct loans to constitute a mere 5 percent of the total student loan volume in the 1994-95 academic year. By 1997 the plan will peak at 50 percent direct student loans. (Clinton's original plan had demanded a complete shift to direct lending.) Even so, says a Simon staffer, "During these five years, you can be sure Sallie Mae isn't going to accept even this plan. They'll try and get back whatever ground they think they lost with this."

If the bill does pass the Senate, a complete direct loan system looks unlikely. "There are many ways this could play out," says a Sallie Mae executive, "but we'll be around as a corporation for a long time. We're not going anywhere." And it's quite possible that even without its lobbying effort, Sallie Mae had little cause for worry. A 1991 report by the Congressional Budget Office pointed out that even if the current student loan program were terminated, there's enough fat in Sallie Mae's government-backed loan portfolio to keep the organization going for the next ten years.

ERIC KONIGSBERG is a former TNR reporter-researcher.

Clinton's radical failure.

THE FOREIGN UNPOLICY

By John B. Judis

It's become accepted wisdom that Bill Clinton isn't interested in foreign affairs and doesn't have a foreign policy. The truth is, however, that a distinctively Clintonian foreign policy has emerged. In his stance toward Western Europe and Bosnia, Japan and China, Clinton has revealed the contours of a new diplomacy—a repudiation not only of the Bush administration's approach, but of American foreign policy since the beginning of World War II. This new policy was summed up with astonishing clarity in Undersecretary of State Peter Tarnoff's controversial off-the-record briefing on May 25, but it has also been evident in the administration's actions and inactions. It's based on a simple premise: Clinton has inverted the guiding principles of the old foreign policy.

Here are four of the most important principles and how Clinton has stood them on their head:

The subordination of economic to foreign policy: During World War II and the cold war, the United States put the containment of Soviet-led communism and the creation of a stable world economic order ahead of immediate national economic interests. The United States tolerated asymmetrical trade and investment restrictions in Europe and Asia and encouraged American companies to license their technology to potential competitors in Japan. Until 1971 the United States also permitted Europe and Japan to undervalue their currencies in relation to the dollar. The loss of short-term profits, it was thought, would be more than offset by an industrially viable Western Europe and East Asia bound together with the United States in a global economic and military alliance.

This approach made sense because the United States commanded a disproportionate share of the world's GNP—50 percent in the late '40s—and needed viable

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Where We Stand

By Albert Shanker, President
American Federation of Teachers

Let's Suppose . . .

For a moment, let's suppose. Suppose the United States were the only industrialized country that did not participate in the Olympics. A number of reports informed us that this was a major disaster. Fewer American kids engaged in sports than youngsters in other countries, fewer exercised and fewer had good eating habits. It was clear that the physical well-being of our nation was at risk.

Legislation was introduced to have the U.S. enter the Olympics in the year 2000. First, there would be an American Olympics to select the athletes to represent us. The business community offered support. High school coaches applauded the idea. Governors and the President met to proclaim Olympic Goals: That the U.S. become first in the world in swimming and diving, basketball, figure skating, the high jump . . . . The President proposed legislation for a U.S. Olympic Commission to establish the rules for participation, etc.

Just as Congress was about to vote on the bill, some members had second thoughts. They pointed out that community recreation facilities and schools, where most of the training would take place, were under local or state control. So it was wrong for the federal government to be involved in trying to raise us to Olympic standards. Also, some didn't like the idea of getting youngsters psyched up to compete with one another. (Isn't cooperation and teamwork what we need?)

The Olympics example tells us we'd be cheating poor kids if we denied them the right to compete because they didn't have decent gyms.

The biggest problem was fairness. Critics said that some of the kids competing would not have had as many opportunities to run, jump and swim as others. Some youngsters might not be able to compete because of poor prenatal care or because they lacked adequate nutrition and health care as children. Some might have spent their childhood in dangerous slums, where they were kept inside for their own safety. They might never have seen a well-equipped gym or had a chance to learn a sport. But other youngsters would have had excellent nutrition and health care, schools with fine athletic facilities, even swimming pools of their own and private coaching. On the whole, these youngsters would undoubtedly perform better than kids who had not had their advantages.

Some members of Congress therefore argued that we should not start domestic competition until all likely contenders had had the same opportunities. So the House Physical Education and Athletic Committee amended the legislation. The U.S. Olympic Commission would not only set standards of participation; it would also shut down any state or local competitions in which some contenders hadn't had access to good prenatal care or nutrition or adequate gyms or swimming pools. Also, for the first five years, no one could be declared a winner or loser in any competition. After five years, Congress would reconsider this ban.

Counterproductive? Yes, but this is how Congress is about to deal with education. Congress is considering Goals 2000, a bill that would get us academic standards and assessments similar to those in other industrialized democracies whose students routinely outperform ours. The system would include consequences designed to get kids to work as hard as they do in these countries because they know that something important—like getting into college or getting a job—is at stake. But supporters of "opportunity-to-learn standards" say that the new standards and assessments should not count for anyone until all our children have the same opportunities.

That's too bad. The Olympics example tells us we'd be cheating poor kids if we denied them the right to compete because they didn't have decent gyms. A lot of youngsters who come from tough neighborhoods have been inspired by the standards of Olympic competition, and they've overcome obstacles and created their own opportunities. Something similar would happen if we challenged disadvantaged youngsters with clear and high education standards and assessments they could study for. When held up to high standards and shown the route to something they really wanted, a lot of youngsters who now do nothing because nothing is asked of them would begin working and succeeding—at the very least, doing better than they do now. And, as the Olympics example also tells us, there would be a lot of pressure to make sure that gyms were built and coaches trained in places where they didn't exist before.

The debate on equity has been wrong. The extreme right talks as though willpower is all youngsters need to overcome every obstacle. This has let conservatives off the hook for improving children's circumstances. The extreme left speaks only about equalizing circumstances and ignores what youngsters themselves can do when quality is demanded of them. In the real world, people participate in the game and do the best they can—sometimes against great odds. That's what we have to insist youngsters do as we insist that the obstacles they face come down.

Mr. Shanker's comments appear in this ad under the auspices of the American Federation of Teachers. Reader correspondence is invited. Address your letters to Mr. Shanker at the AFT, 555 New Jersey Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20001. © 1993 by Albert Shanker.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

trading partners to buy its goods. By the early '70s, however, Japan and Western Europe had become fierce competitors. Under Nixon and Treasury Secretary John Connally, the United States began to be more assertive about its economic interests. But as long as the Soviet threat loomed, the government was still inclined to give precedence to security concerns. Bush himself adhered to this definition of U.S. security. Only under political pressure in his last year in office did he begin to waver. His January 1992 trip to Japan was first intended to review the U.S.-Japan security relationship but ended up being a lobbying excursion for U.S. automakers.

In contrast, Clinton has placed short-term American economic interests ahead of any broader issues of foreign policy. In Asia trade has taken precedence over security. Relations with Europe have been dominated by economic concerns. After the Bosnian Serbs rejected a peace plan last May, the president lamented, "I felt really badly because I don't want to have to spend more time on [Bosnia] than is absolutely necessary, because what I got elected to do was to get Americans to look at our own problems." As Tarnoff put it in his talk, from which the administration immediately distanced itself, "Our economic interests are paramount."

International security as indivisible: During the first part of the twentieth century, most nations conducted foreign policy and economic relations on a piecemeal, bilateral basis. But the Great Depression and World War II convinced the United States to change its approach. After World War II the government promoted the idea that the nations of Western Europe and Japan were part of an integrated trading and security system in which a threat to one part was a threat to the whole.

The new security system was overtly justified by the Soviet threat, but its purpose went beyond that of containing communism. The United States was as worried about the emergence of rival trading blocs in Europe and Asia as it was about Soviet troops crossing the Rhine. Some took this concept of indivisibility to extremes, seeing every minor conflict as a struggle between the free world and communism, between free trade and protectionism; Bush himself invoked indivisibility in justifying U.S. intervention in Kuwait.

But in Bosnia Clinton has repudiated this concept. He has treated it as a regional conflict that should be resolved, if at all, by the European powers. It is a conflict, Tarnoff explained, in which "other regional players have a great stake" and should make "the very hard decisions on the commitment of men and women and resources." Clinton's position assumes the division of the world into semiautonomous regions in which each region's "players" are responsible for maintaining order. With the cold war over, Clinton evidently believes, the United States can return to its nineteenth-century strategy of picking and choosing among conflicts.

The great power basis of multilateralism: As World War II drew to a close, Franklin Roosevelt promoted the idea of a new international order that would be organized by the "four policemen"—the United States, Great Britain, the Soviet Union and China—acting as the executive committee of a new United Nations. He rejected schemes for a new supranational U.N. in which the nations of the world, voting equally, would have an air force at their disposal to settle conflicts. Though Roosevelt's plan for the four policemen perished in the cold war, the United States still followed his general approach. In multilateral actions, it took ultimate responsibility for objectives and execution. The United States also backed the U.N. but insisted decisions be lodged in the Security Council, not the General Assembly. Though American multilateralism broke down in Southeast Asia, it succeeded in Europe and East Asia. During Desert Storm, Bush and Secretary of State James Baker seemed to be laying the basis for a new post-cold war multilateralism.

Clinton and Secretary of State Warren Christopher have repeatedly proclaimed the virtues of multilateralism, but in practice they have subverted it. In Europe the administration proposed joint action in Bosnia but then backed off at a hint of opposition, contending that its acquiescence signified an embrace of unity. In fact, it was aiding in the breakdown of the Western alliance. The United States was ruling out any possibility of multilateral action and any progression from an American-led to a more equally shared security policy. It was not so much multilateralism as abnegationism.

Clinton has made a pro forma gesture toward the Rooseveltian idea—proposing that Japan and Germany become permanent members of the U.N. Security Council. But he is likely to abandon that plan, too, as it encounters opposition from Britain, France and General Assembly members. In its policy toward the U.N., the administration has more generally followed the utopian example of FDR's Vice President Henry Wallace, treating it as an independent body with a will of its own entirely separate from American initiative.

The democratic objectives of foreign policy: American foreign policy has always combined some measure of realism and idealism—the defense of national security and economic interest with the attempt to extend democracy and freedom throughout the world. At times, the United States has subordinated one to the other, but at the nation's finest moments it has fused the two approaches within an understanding that by making the world more democratic, it was also making it more peaceful and prosperous. Conversely, the United States believed that by discouraging authoritarian regimes—especially those based on virulent nationalism, racism or messianic communism—it was making the outbreak of war less likely.

Clinton gave voice to America's democratic aspirations during the campaign, criticizing Bush for subordinating the pursuit of "the global democratic revolution" to "old balance of power strategies." "No American foreign policy can succeed if it slights our commitment to democracy," he declared in Milwaukee on October 1. But as president, Clinton has largely ignored the cause of "global democratic revolution," whether in China,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Haiti or the former Yugoslavia. Russia has been the lone exception.

Clinton has not embraced the kind of realpolitik he attributed to Bush. Instead, he has subordinated American foreign policy to what Lenin called "economism"—the relentless pursuit of short-term economic gain. Clinton's China policy has not reflected Metternich or Kissinger, but rather the National Association of Manufacturers. His Balkan inaction has been justified by Bosnia's seeming irrelevance to current American economic ills. Clinton has not merely abandoned the idealistic component of American foreign policy; he has abandoned the high concept of foreign policy itself.

Perhaps the greatest flaw in this dramatic reversal of American policy is its belief that America's security and economic interests are only linked in one direction: that without economic strength, there can be no global reach. But it is just as true that without an active American presence in Europe and Asia, there can be no resuscitation of domestic economic strength. American power remains the indispensable underpinning of a relatively open world trading system and the bulwark against what the Berkeley Roundtable on International Economics, writing in *The Highest Stakes*, calls a regional "neomercantilism."

DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

To Clinton's credit, he has recognized the need for a new international economic strategy to deal with the emergence of European and Asian trading blocs, as evidenced in his attempt to reduce America's budget deficit while pressuring Japan to reduce its trade surpluses. But Clinton has combined an active and militant economic strategy with a passive and phlegmatic diplomacy. He has hectored the Europeans for restricting bids by American telecommunications companies while allowing NATO to disintegrate under the impact of Bosnia. He has blasted the Japanese government for not accepting bids from American computer companies while failing to link the broader U.S. demand for Japanese economic concessions to American willingness to retain its security role in Asia. Instead of seeking a grand bargain with the Japanese, he has simply sought a bargain. Similarly, Clinton has allowed his China policy to be dictated by domestic lobbies rather than by the need to counter China's growing military presence. It is not in America's interest for East Asia to return to old hostilities or to move under Japan's influence toward becoming a closed trading system. Yet by failing to emphasize security relations, Clinton is increasing the likelihood of these outcomes.

The Clinton administration has also recognized that, with the cold war's end, conflicts have become increasingly regional. They don't threaten to expand into world wars in the way that ostensibly local conflicts in Southeast Asia or the Caribbean did during the cold war. Morally, American acquiescence in the murder of Bosnia's Muslims may be comparable to British acceptance of Hitler's Anschluss, but strategically, American and European appeasement is not laying the basis for an imminent world war.

It doesn't follow, however, that regional conflicts in Europe or Asia have no bearing on global stability and American security. Bosnia has been a perfect example. American intervention could have provided the United States with an opportunity not only to discourage pernicious ethnic nationalism, but also to refashion the NATO alliance and to counter the centrifugal tendencies in world capitalism. Instead, U.S. inaction has imperiled NATO and loosened the ties between the United States and Europe. It has even raised doubts about America's willingness to play an active role in Asia. Arguing that what happened in Europe could happen in the Far East, one Japanese diplomat told a Tokyo newspaper, "There is an image in people's minds that the United States is withdrawing from this region."

Clinton has acknowledged that America's economic woes have limited the nation's ability to project its power overseas and have made it more important than ever to create multilateral alliances in which its allies

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

share an increasing burden of military costs. But the United States will not be able to achieve that objective in a single stroke—and certainly not by adopting a strategy of regional autonomy, unilateralism or deference to the U.N. The United States remains the world's most powerful military and economic power. As the conflict in Bosnia has demonstrated, when the United States stands aside, old rivalries, latent during the cold war, reassert themselves.

Taken as a whole, Clinton's policy of narrowly conceived retrenchment has reinforced the entropic tendencies in the world and discredited those forces and institutions that might have laid the basis for a new multilateral security. To all of this, Clinton officials have a variety of answers. They have insisted that the president's success in office will depend on whether he is able to create a robust economy and provide universal health insurance. If he does that, they have argued, it won't matter what happens in the rest of the world. But this judgment, like so many others of this presidency, is deeply flawed and could prove the president's undoing.

To begin with, Clinton will not be able to reinvigorate the American economy without disentangling the web of deficits, devaluations, global overcapacity, Third World debt, technological unemployment and trade and investment barriers that have plagued the world economy for almost two decades. Clinton has to get European and East Asian nations to cooperate with him in an agenda for global growth—and he can't do that without addressing broader security concerns.

Moreover, much of the president's ability to achieve change at home depends on the authority he musters abroad. Clinton's domestic difficulties during his first six months have not stemmed from inattention to detail or from the design of his program or even from a fractious Congress. Clinton has had sufficient clout—presidents always have the power to punish and reward legislators—but he has lacked sufficient authority. Much of that authority comes from the president's role in foreign policy. By eschewing foreign policy, Clinton has allowed himself to become a kind of glorified secretary of commerce who must subject his programs to the whims of every private lobby. (Indeed, Clinton has even inverted the role of politician and statesman, bargaining away his policy on Haiti during budget negotiations with the Black Caucus over the BTU tax.)

In abandoning a prime role for foreign policy, Clinton has forsaken exactly what he criticized Bush for lacking—the so-called "vision thing." Americans have with rare exceptions seen themselves as having a special role in the world—in the eighteenth century as a New Jerusalem, and then in the twentieth century as the champion of a new democratic and prosperous world. Democrats from Franklin Roosevelt to John Kennedy played a principal role in forging that vision, but Clinton, who claims to be their heir, has replaced their pursuit of high principle with the accountant's balance sheet and the banker's safe deposit box. He has encouraged an obsession with narrow economic achievement and economic goals that he will not be able to meet—no matter how well he governs. In turning his back on foreign policy, he has only made his failure at home more likely. •

GUIDE TO THE FIVE DIMENSIONS

	1st Dimension	2nd Dimension	3rd Dimension	4th Dimension	5th Dimension
Currently controversial population control technique	abstinence	condom	abortion	RU-486	lesbianism
Dinosaur	trilobite	lizard	Jurassic Park	Dino Flintstone	Eric Clapton
Cereal box cartoon character	Tony the Tiger	the Quaker Oats Quaker	Count Chocula and Frankenberry	Jerry Seinfeld	Ross Perot
Insidious labor practice	minimum wage	part-time workers	subcontracting	robots	slavery
Object of middle-class desire	tennis ball	Picasso painting	ski chalet	three weeks in Provence	Charlie Rose
Flight mode	Aeroflot	United (coach)	Concorde	the Star Trek beam thingy	astral projection
Elastic structure	rubber band	Silly Putty	earthquake-proof Los Angeles skyscraper	theory of reincarnation	David Gergen
Feistiness role model	the common cold virus	Lucky, the Lucky Charms leprechaun	crash test dummy	Camille Paglia	Marxism
Snack food	unpeeled carrot sticks	tub of chocolate frosting with wooden spoon	Norwegian lox with Maui onion and capers on pumpernickel	anabolic steroids	Clinton nominees

DOUGLAS COUPLAND

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PUBLIC POLICY BULLETIN BOARD®

Recent Books and Reports from the Nation's Think Tanks and Advocacy Groups

NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES (NCSL)

State Legislative Staff Directory 1993 identifies researchers and policy specialists who monitor education, health care, energy, taxation, labor, criminal justice and more. Lists name, address, telephone number and subspecialty. Because they research, write and evaluate proposals that eventually become law, legislative staff are the first and best contact for a citizen or group interested in proposing or discussing legislation. Ideal for those involved in government relations in libraries, associations, or lobbies. 162 pps. $38 w/shipping. FAX 303-863-8003. Phone 303-830-2200. NCSL, Marketing Department, 1560 Broadway STE 700. Denver, CO 80202.

POLICY STUDIES BOOKS

The Policy Studies Organization publishes the equivalent of a book of chapters relevant to specific policy studies topics in each issue of the ***Policy Studies Journal*** and the ***Policy Studies Review***. Recent topics have included public policy toward the environment, agriculture, energy, judicial review, state problems, economic development, and the future of public policy. Each issue or book is only $5 apiece, or eight issues a year for only $20. Write to PSO. 361 Lincoln Hall, University of Illinois, Urbana, IL 61801.

THE HENRY L. STIMSON CENTER

New publications from the **Henry L. Stimson Center** on peacekeeping and multilateral export controls:

- **Regional Organizations and Peacekeeping: Experiences in Latin America and Africa** by Virginia Page Fortna.
- **Non-UN Peacekeeping Operations in the Middle East** by Mona Ghali.
- **The Origins of COCOM: Lessons for Contemporary Proliferation Control Regimes** by John H. Henshaw.

Price: $6.00 each. Write to The Henry L. Stimson Center, 21 Dupont Circle, NW, Fifth Floor, Washington, D.C. 20036, or call 202-223-5956.

PUBLIC INTEREST PUBLICATIONS

Hundreds of publications from the nation's leading public interest organizations, such as the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Economic Policy Institute, Friends of the Earth, Institute for Energy and Environmental Research, Washington Institute on Near East Studies, and dozens more are in stock every day at Public Interest Publications, 3030 Clarendon Blvd., #200, Arlington, VA 22201 (across the street from the Clarendon Metro stop). Open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday–Friday. Call toll free 800-537-9359 for a catalog.

COMPETITIVE ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE

Assessing the Empirical Basis of the "Biodiversity Crisis," by Julian L. Simon and Aaron Wildavsky. Simon and Wildavsky argue that the truth is endangered by the species debate. $4.00.

The Impact of Price Regulation on the Pharmaceutical Industry, by Terree Wasley, surveys the history of price controls and concludes that they will cripple development of pharmaceutical products. $4.00. Contact CEI at 202-331-1010.

NEW REPORT FROM PUBLIC AGENDA

The Public Agenda Foundation, known nationwide for its nonpartisan research into the public's understanding of key policy issues, has just completed ***Divided Within, Besieged Without: The Politics of Education Reform in Four Typical American School Districts***. This case study report provides a disturbing picture of how political gridlock inside school systems has stalled efforts to reform America's schools. More than 200 education stakeholders (teachers, principals, administrators, school board members, business executives, and parents) from four diverse school districts participated in face-to-face interviews. The results reveal divisions, misunderstandings, resentments and miscommunication that make education reform precarious and often impossible. Order single copies of *Divided Within, Besieged Without* for $10/each; nonprofit and bulk orders for $5/each. Please call or write PAF-Education Report (attn: Isa Simon), 6 East 39th St. #900, NY, NY 10016. 212-686-6610. AMEX cards welcome.

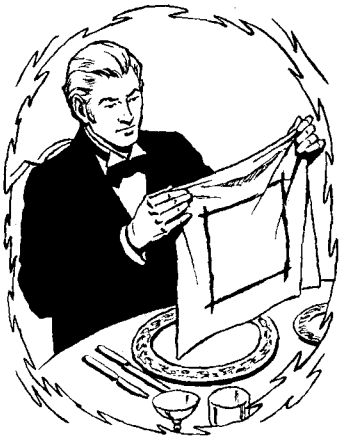
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A plea for higher dimensions.

THE NEWER PARADIGM

By Jim Holt

As the new millennium draws near, we in the United States are suffering from a dearth of millennial ideas. Supply-side economics, multiculturalism, cold fusion, caller I.D.—all these Promethean schemes for transforming the human condition have lately come to naught. In their wake, small ideas and incremental thinking hold sway. Yet the popular appetite for visionary conceits remains strong. Has Hillary Clinton not struck a chord with her "politics of meaning," especially when she calls for the "remaking of the American way of politics, government, indeed life"? These are nebulous words, admittedly, but I think I know what she is groping toward. I should therefore like to make a proposal, or rather a plea: a plea that we open our minds to *the existence of higher dimensions.* And since (as I shall explain) the beginning of higher dimensional wisdom lies in willfully inducing confusion between what is left and what is right, I can think of no forum in which this plea could be more aptly voiced than THE NEW REPUBLIC.



Two Dimensions—Length and Width

What is a dimension, anyway? This has always been a vexed question. Dr. Johnson, after what he described to Mrs. Thrale as an "infernal struggle," defined it as "that which is mensurable in a direction orthogonal to a similar and coexistent extension." He accompanied this somewhat unhelpful gloss with the literary citation, "*Hath not a Jew dimensions?* (Shakespeare)." A line, we all know, has one dimension; a plane has two. We are said to live in a three-dimensional world, one structured by height, breadth and depth. For many great thinkers this does not just *happen* to be true—it is a matter of necessity. Aristotle, for instance, declared at the outset of *On the Heavens* that "the three dimensions are all that there are." Since everything has a beginning, a middle and an end, he argued, it follows that the number of the world is the triad. A body with more than three dimensions, he maintained, cannot exist even in thought. Ptolemy adduced a simpler demonstration of the intrinsic tri-dimensionality of nature: to wit, that it is impossible for more than three mutually perpendicular rods to meet at a point. This less than overwhelming bit of reasoning was also seized upon by Leibniz and by Galileo, who had the intellectual boldness to throw over Ptolemy's geocentric universe but could not part with the equally parochial 3-D worldview.

It was not until the seventeenth century that the possibility of higher dimensions was seriously considered. The Cambridge Platonists were probably the first to talk of a "fourth dimension"; one among their number, Henry More, suggested in 1671 that spirits were beings from this place. Around the same time Descartes took the seemingly innocuous step of adding an extra algebraic variable to his geometry, which enabled him to describe four-dimensional figures he called *sursolides.* Timid contemporaries found this intolerable; in 1685 John Wallis denounced the *sursolide* as a "Monster in Nature, less possible than a Chimera or a Centaur!"

The quest for higher dimensions suffered an apparent setback in the next century with Kant, who declared the three dimensions of space to be a pure form of intuition prior to all experience, and thus "apodictically certain." Yet in making dimensionality phenomenal rather than real—a matter of how our perception is structured, not an objective feature of the external world—he at least seemed to leave things flexible: Could we not somehow remove the 3-D glasses with which we make sense of our experience and replace them with, say, a 5-D pair? And what could the Königsberg philosopher have had in mind when he wrote that "if it is possible that there could be regions with other dimensions, it is very likely that God has somewhere brought them into being"?

In the early nineteenth century Hegel presented in his *Encyclopedia* the latest and least intelligible in the long line of "proofs" that space must have precisely three dimensions. But just as Hegel had had the misfortune to demonstrate, by a priori reason alone, the neces-

JIM HOLT is a New York writer.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sity of there being seven planets in our solar system on the eve of the discovery of the eighth, so too was his dimensional proof infelicitously timed. For around the middle of the century, with the pioneering of non-Euclidean and *n*-dimensional geometries by Lobachevsky, Riemann and Grassmann, the mathematical reality of higher dimensions became undeniable. The great French mathematician Jules Henri Poincaré reaffirmed the Kantian theme that space is a mental artifact: "Experience does not prove to us that space has three dimensions," he wrote. "It only proves to us that it is convenient to attribute three to it." (Poincaré briefly considered, but ultimately rejected, the hypothesis that we experience space as three-dimensional for no deeper cause than that our sense of balance and orientation is due to three semicircular canals in our ears.)

At first this mathematical breakthrough, this magnificent triumph of the imagination over the senses, was greeted by scientists and philosophers with incredulity and downright enmity. Within a couple of decades, however, the notion that the space around us might possess occult dimensions came to beguile the public imagination much as the Big Bang does today. In England the fascination was especially acute, owing to the 1884 publication there of E.A. Abbott's *Flatland: A Romance in Many Dimensions.* In this first popular fiction on the subject—which doubled as a satire on Victorian society—a planar world of two-dimensional creatures is visited by a spherical sojourner from the third dimension, with subversive results. In the United States accounts of the fourth dimension abounded in the popular press; between 1902 and 1913 *Harper's* alone published no fewer than five articles on the subject.

Three Dimensions-- Length, Width and Depth

The fourth dimension was warmly received in spiritualist circles, where experience with it was apparently quite routine in séances, mainly in the form of parlor tricks such as joining solid wooden rings and extracting objects from sealed boxes. Although Madame Blavatsky was less than enthralled by the idea, many of her fellow theosophists saw the fourth dimension as an antidote to the evils of materialism and strove to cultivate their "astral vision," the better to apprehend this noumenal reality. Writers such as Dostoyevsky, Wells, Proust, Wodehouse and Gertrude Stein sprinkled their books with references to it. In 1901 Joseph Conrad and Ford Madox Ford co-authored a novel called *The Inheritors* about a ruthless people from the fourth dimension who gradually take over our world. The cubists and the Russian futurists endeavored to paint it. Scriabin and Edgar Varèse thought they could express it in their music. Oscar Wilde lampooned it: in his 1891 story "The Canterville Ghost," a wraith who has anciently haunted an English manor is exasperated by his inability to frighten the new tenants, a family of vulgarly unflappable Americans—"so, hastily adopting the Fourth Dimension of Space as a means of escape, he vanished through the wainscoting and the house became quiet."

Alas, just as the gospel of the fourth dimension was on the verge of liberating mankind, of bringing about a Brave New World of rococo geometry and boundless space, along came Einstein with his theory of relativity. By conflating space and time into the seamless four-dimensional manifold "spacetime," Einstein's theory misled the public and the intelligentsia alike into believing that the fourth dimension was merely time—nothing very marvelous or occult about that. Soon after, Freud did his part, submitting that believers in a fourth dimension were merely "projecting." The idea of higher spatial dimensions came to seem passé, and interest in it dried up.

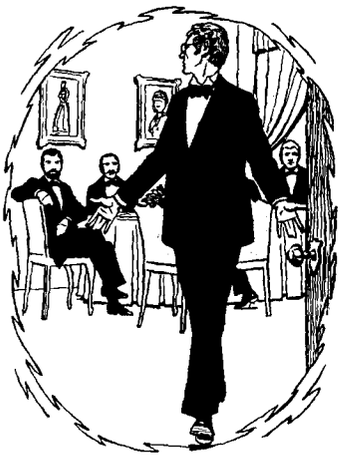
Still, there remain a number of unexplained incidents that can be rendered intelligible only by appeal to the fourth dimension. The case of Gottfried Plattner is typical of these. In 1896 this Alsatian-born science and modern languages master at a West Sussex grammar school vanished without a trace when an explosion occurred during a chemistry experiment as a result of his students mischievously mismeasuring the reagents. Nine days later he reappeared just as suddenly, landing on top of a field worker some miles from the school. Medical examination revealed him to be quite fine, except that his heart now beat on the right side of his chest—that is to say, on the opposite side from everyone else's. His liver, lungs and other internal organs were similarly contraposed, and he had gone from being left-handed to right-handed. The only explanation for this anomaly was that the blast had propelled him into the fourth dimension, where a "rotation" of his body reversed left and right (in the same way a two-dimensional silhouette of a body can be reversed by flipping it over in the third dimension).

An even more disquieting episode apparently involving higher dimensions occurred in Los Angeles in 1940, when an obscure but gifted architect named Quintus Teal set out to design a house in the form of a 4-D hypercube, or "tesseract." Lacking direct access to the fourth dimension, he was forced to "unfold" the object in three dimensions. (Just as a regular 3-D cube can be unfolded and flattened into a cruciform array of its six square facets, so can the eight cubes that make up the facets of a 4-D hypercube be disassembled into a three-dimensional arrangement; Dalí depicted Christ crucified on such a structure in his 1954 painting *The Crucifixion: Corpus Hypercubicus.*) Teal's house was more unstable than he realized, however. Soon after it was built in Laurel Canyon, a mild earthquake apparently caused it to fold up into an actual hypercube, presumably trapping the architect and his two clients, who were inspecting the new abode at the time, in the fourth dimension. None of the three has been heard from since.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In addition to such anecdotal evidence, powerful support for the existence of higher dimensions comes from contemporary particle physics. The only plausible way physicists have found to theoretically reconcile gravity (which governs the cosmos in the large) with quantum mechanics (which governs it in the small) is by supposing that space actually consists of nine dimensions. The six supernumerary ones go unnoticed by us in ordinary experience because of their extreme tininess: rather than being infinitely extended like length, breadth and depth, they are curled up into little circles of infinitesimal radii. According to this story, all nine dimensions were created equal at the Big Bang. For some reason, though, only three of them got inflated in the subsequent expansion; the rest have supposedly atrophied, at least in our region of the universe.

But have they really? Might we not be surrounded by wondrous caverns of possibility that our eyes do not yet behold? Perhaps we are like the prisoners in Plato's cave: fettered from childhood so that they are allowed to see only the shadows they cast on the cave wall, these benighted creatures mistake the images before them for reality; hearing their own voices echoed off the shadows, they imagine *themselves* to have only two dimensions. Or perhaps we are more like the bustard, a bird whose nervous system is adapted to the two-dimensional world of the open plains it inhabits; lacking the spatial imagination simply to step over obstacles it encounters, it goes on bumping against them until it tumbles across. For nearly the entire existence of mankind our own movements have been effectively confined by gravity to two dimensions, with the dream of flight expressing our yearning for the third; it was less than three decades ago that, seeing images of the round blue Earth from space for the first time, we came to appreciate fully the tri-dimensionality of our situation.



"I Can Move in Space, but . . ."

But how do we, individually and as a nation, make the leap beyond the third dimension? "Could I but rotate my arm out of the limits set to it, I could thrust it into a thousand dimensions," boasted one of the Utopians in H. G. Wells's *Men Like Gods*. Unfortunately, Wells left unaddressed the question of how one is actually to do this. Mystics meditate upon higher dimensions; physicists calculate with them. How, though, can we discover them in all of their physical reality and exploit them to become . . . as gods?

The first step is consciousness-raising. We must learn to see at least one higher dimension—the fourth, let us say—in the mind's eye. The quickest route to such vision is via analogy. Imagine that, like the Flatlanders of Abbott's fiction, we were two-dimensional beings—circles, squares, triangles and so on—sliding around on an infinite plane. How would it look to us if a three-dimensional object, a sphere, for example, made its way through our horizontal world? Suppose its direction to be downward. At first, with the sphere above us, we would see nothing at all. At the moment in its descent when it made initial "contact" with our planar realm, we would observe a single point. As it continued its passage, the point would expand into a circle—a 2-D cross-section of the sphere—whose radius would grow to a maximum when the sphere was halfway through. Then we would see the circle begin to contract, shrinking down to a point again and disappearing as the sphere completed its transmigration. Now, try to fix in mind the higher-dimensional analog of this: a 4-D "hypersphere" passing through our 3-D space. A pointlike thing would suddenly appear, blow up into a beach ball, deflate again to a point, and then vanish. Simple enough. On reflection, it is not hard to see that *any* moving, wiggling, expanding, shrinking object can be viewed by us "Spacelanders" as a 4-D hyperobject flitting through our little 3-D world. The tricky part is making the intuitive leap from the 3-D apparition to the 4-D reality—the same leap that the Flatlander must make to imagine a full-blooded sphere from its two-dimensional manifestation.

Flatland cuts three-dimensional space into two parts: the region above and the region below; "Upward, yet not Northward!" was the motto of the Flatlander who aspired to move in a genuinely novel direction. Similarly, the 3-D world to which we believe ourselves confined bifurcates the four-dimensional space surrounding it. Christian doctrine acknowledges this in dividing the cosmos into three layers: the temporal world, heaven "above," though in no assignable direction, and hell "below." But we need new words to name these otherworldly directions. One turn-of-the-century enthusiast suggested *ana* and *kata* (Greek for "above" and "below"); an even better choice would be *apo* ("away") and *eiso* ("within"). And to denote extension in the fourth dimension, eking out the series "length," "breadth" and "depth," how about *throughth*? Another aid to intuiting the fourth dimension (as I mentioned at the outset) is deliberately confounding left and right—say, by pretending you are simultaneously driving your car in the United States and in the U.K. From the perspective of the fourth dimension, the distinction is meaningless: our 3-D world viewed from the *ana* direction is the mirror image of it viewed *kata*-ward. A left shoe is equivalent to the right one; neoliberals are the same as neoconservatives.

Once the fourth dimension is imaginatively visualized—a task that might require the devotion of a lifetime—stepping out into hyperspace should become practicable. Maneuvering oneself into the fourth dimension means moving, in a rather special sense, toward one's inside, in the direction of one's heart. This must be accomplished through a pure act of will, since our muscles are all oriented for 3-D motility and any "hyper-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

muscles" with which we may be endowed have certainly atrophied for want of use.

And what vistas will be open to us, what new powers will we possess, when this feat is accomplished! To grasp the possibilities, try to conceive of what the Flatlander would experience were he to be lifted above his planar world: since all enclosures in Flatland are merely two-dimensional, he would be able to peer inside of every chamber; the entrails of his fellow Flatlanders would be open to his view; he could effortlessly escape any cocktail party or reach into any safe; and so on. Now, imagine the analogous clairvoyance and omnipotence we would enjoy were we capable of moving freely into the fourth dimension. Opportunities for plunder would be abundant. The greedy hyperspatialist could enter any wine cellar and drink up all the 1961 Lafite-Rothschild without even having to uncork it, or reach "around" the window at Tiffany's and snatch the biggest diamond on display. A surgeon with the 4-D knack could remove your appendix without cutting into your skin, just like a Filipino healer. Iraqi nuclear facilities would be immediately visible to satellites launched into the fourth dimension. The federal deficit could be rotated in hyperspace to become a surplus. The pious would have the option of moving heavenward without all the bother and expense of dying. The Gordian knot would unravel in a trice. An *enormous* number of parking spaces would suddenly open up; missing socks and tools would be gratefully recovered.

"*Time* Is the Fourth Dimension!"

The intellectual and philosophical gains are even more exhilarating to contemplate. As the Russian mystic P.D. Ouspensky noted in his *Tertium Organum* (1912), the fourth dimension offers us an explanation of all the "enigmas of the world," the riddles of life and death, of matter and mind. How is it, for example, that spirits seem to hover so close to us without actually occupying physical space? Simple: they are but a few feet away in the fourth dimension—guardian angels *ana* and malevolent demons *kata*, with poltergeists moving back and forth. Miracles become explicable without ceasing to be miraculous: Jesus fed the 5,000 not by shaming them into bringing out from under their cloaks the box lunches they had been selfishly concealing—as some naturalistically inclined theologians have supposed—but by producing loaves and fishes from the fourth dimension. (The Red Sea crossing is equally easy to account for, but I am still struggling to find a 4-D explanation for how the walls of Thebes were built by a flute alone.) Just as seemingly incompatible scientific theories such as relativity and quantum mechanics can be reconciled in higher dimensions, so can the array of conflicting theories about JFK's assassination be hyperspatially "rotated" to fit together harmoniously. The fourth dimension will permit all contradictions to be resolved, and will usher in the badly needed trope of *hyperirony*. Metaphysically, it will bring about a great leap forward; as Ouspensky wrote, "When we shall see or feel ourselves in the world of four dimensions we shall see that the world of three dimensions does not really exist and has never existed; that it was the creation of our own fantasy, a phantom host, an optical illusion, a delusion—anything one pleases excepting only reality."

Most important, the apprehension of higher dimensions will lead to a new image of man. Instead of viewing ourselves as finite creatures, born to rut and flourish for a season only to wither and die, we would see that we are truly timeless hyperbeings capable of endless dimensional ascent. Passing through this 3-D vale of tears—manifesting our younger, more comely facets first, as it happens, and our older, uglier ones later—we are destined eventually to make our way into the fourth dimension, and thence to the fifth, the sixth and so on, asymptomatically approaching our Creator, who dwells in a space of infinite dimension.

One morning not long ago I was idly fooling around with some chopsticks left over from the previous evening's takeout Chinese. Suddenly I realized I had done a prodigious thing: I had arranged four of the chopsticks so that they were *all perpendicular to one another!* In other words, I had stumbled onto an empirical rebuttal of the strongest argument Ptolemy, Galileo and Leibniz could muster to ground their conviction that space is inherently tri-dimensional. Unfortunately, at that moment a fact checker from a ladies' magazine rang up with a few annoying queries, and I had to put the sticks down. Returning to them a few minutes later, I found to my immense frustration that I could not get them back into the 4-D configuration again.

A week or so later I was strolling through Chinatown and, on a whim, dropped into a curio shop. As I browsed in the dusty, gloomy, cluttered interior, a peculiar item composed of delicately painted matchsticks caught my eye. On closer examination I discovered that its intricate geometry included a vertex at which four of the sticks met orthogonally. My heart leapt: a four-dimensional bibelot! When I asked the old Chinese man who ran the place how much he wanted for it, he quoted a price of $12, which struck me as rather dear. After arguing with him for a while, I exited the shop in dudgeon, figuring I could find the same thing cheaper elsewhere.

I am sorry to report that I have not yet succeeded in doing so; nor have I been able to find the shop with the original object again. When I do, I shall certainly buy the thing and bring it to Washington. There I'll make an offering of it to Mrs. Clinton as a sort of seed or crystal around which American society, politics—and indeed life—can be reconstituted along four-dimensional lines, for a truly millennial millennium. We had better hurry: I hear the Japanese have already got something quite similar in the works. •

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Monsters and Masters

Steven Spielberg's latest, **Jurassic Park** (Universal), is an eye-popper. What popped my eyes most was the stamina of a 9-year-old boy. In less than twenty-four hours, he is pinned beneath an overturned car, slides down a cliff, is pinned again under a car, cowers beneath a stampede of prehistoric animals, is blown off a fence when 10,000 volts suddenly electrify it, eats a huge meal and dodges two gigantic predatory beasts in a hotel kitchen. His 12-year-old sister shares most of these adventures. Next to the deeds of these two children, the special effects in the film don't stack up.

Yet the special effects are there. For the dozen or so Americans who haven't read Michael Crichton's novel (I'm one of them), let's note that the action takes place on a Caribbean island where a zillionaire entrepreneur has created a theme park of living dinosaurs. His staff of scientists has bred them from DNA patterns in the blood of dinosaurs found in mosquitoes that have been preserved in amber for 65 million years. (Got that?)

The plot, wrapped throughout with thick music, doesn't need summary. The actors don't need comment, though some of them are well-known—Sam Neill, Laura Dern, Richard Attenborough, Jeff Goldblum. Several organizations worked on constructing the monsters and on the computerized animation. The results make poor old King Kong look like something from a Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade. Such is progress.

The picture, like the park, has a theme, of course: science can overstep the bounds of nature's rightful domain and will suffer for it. I can't see that this message will do children any harm, and the lifelike monsters ought to thrill and frighten them. The last is important—up to a point, anyway. Once I took a little girl to her very first film, a fairy tale with a witch. When the witch got nasty, my friend shrieked and covered her face with her hands. I was afraid that I'd made a mistake in bringing her until I saw that, though her face was covered, she had spread her fingers and was peering at the witch.

One detail bothered this non-child. The plot has a villain, a traitor. On the console at his desk is pasted a photo of J. Robert Oppenheimer.

A year late I have caught up with *Projections*. Subtitled "A Forum for Film Makers," this is an annual volume—paperbound, large-published by Faber and Faber. Issue No. 1, 1992, is 183 pp., $14.95; Issue No 2, 1993, 380 pp., same price. Both are plentifully illustrated, and both are absorbing.

The editors are John Boorman, the director, and Walter Donohue, of Faber. What a relief to read a film journal that is neither thinly disguised boosterism for current releases nor academic theoretical cliquing. A blessed silence of critics.

Which is herewith broken—by (generally) admiring comment. Almost half of No. 1 is given over to Boorman's journal for 1991, detailing his experiences in trying to make films. The journal is a bit too long for its substance. It's followed by a meaty symposium in which a number of directors are asked what pictures they would make if given unconditional freedom. A few of them have specific answers: Claude Miller would make Joyce's *Ulysses*, Francesco Rosi chooses Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*. A non-surprising number say they really prefer some sort of limitation and would be a bit bewildered by absolute freedom. (François Truffaut said more than once that he envied the old-time Hollywood directors who were handed four or five scripts a year and were ordered to make them.)

There's a flavorful excerpt from a forthcoming biography of Emeric Pressburger—co-author of, among many others, *The Red Shoes*—recounting how this Hungarian youth got to Berlin in the late Weimar days and scratched his way into the film world. There is a lovely piece by the late Nestor Almendros on photographing beautiful women, a deft memorial poem to George Cukor by Tony Harrison and several interviews, including an acute one with Jonathan Demme. And there is *Surviving Desire* by Hal Hartley, the beautifully truthful script of a one-hour film that this exceptional artist made for television.

Issue No. 2 has some counterparts to No. 1. The journal this time is the one that Bertrand Tavernier kept in 1992, translated by Shawn Whiteside and Lenny Borger, full of the vivacity and empathy that characterize Tavernier.

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Guilty As Sin. *Twisty thriller. A lawyer, fascinating Rebecca De Mornay, defends a man accused of murder, attractive-unbearable Don Johnson. Sidney Lumet directs sharply. (Reviewed 7/5/93)* **Menace II Society.** *Familiar material—battered and battering black lives in Watts—revitalized by the direction of two 20-year-old brothers, Allen and Albert Hughes. (7/5/93)* **Much Ado About Nothing.** *Once again Kenneth Branagh's adaptation and directing make Shakespeare beautifully cinematic. He and Emma Thompson head a cast that, mostly, sustains the delight. (5/10/93)* **The Music of Chance.** *Wonderfully* right *adaptation of a Paul Auster novel. James Spader and Mandy Patinkin as two men who pay a strange price for losing at poker. Philip Haas directs subtly. (6/21/93)* **—SK**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Much of the journal deals with his activities and travels on behalf of his two latest films: *La Guerre sans nom*, his documentary on the Algerian war, which has had only two showings in New York (both of which I was forced to miss) courtesy of the Human Rights Watch Festival, and *L 627*, a fiction film whose title refers to a French drug law, which has not yet been shown here at all.

The symposium this time addresses the topic "Cinema after the Millennium?" Among the widely varying answers, the most spooky is from the gifted cinematographer Philippe Rousselot (*Diva, A River Runs Through It*). Sparked by *Terminator 2*, in which a hand turns into a knife blade (and unwittingly reminding us of the beasts in *Jurassic Park*), Rousselot foresees a film revolution based on technological process. Any image can be turned into computer data; the computer can treat that data any way it chooses; the image can then be reconstituted into high-quality film. Thus any image can be transformed to any other at will.

Some of us have long thought that film was the place where, outstandingly, technology served humanist ends. Is this belief being threatened? Rousselot thinks not: "[The machine] won't replace our imagination. But it slumbers in the heart of our mythologies. It can still make us dream, but it will not dream in our place." Let's hope that the machine reads and remembers this.

The screenplay this time is Tim Robbins's for *Bob Roberts*. There are also informative interviews with Willem Dafoe (the first actor as subject so far), George Miller and Robert Altman, among others. For me, the most enlightening interview was with the English writer-director-producer Sidney Gilliat, now in his mid-80s. Gilliat worked with Alfred Hitchcock on both *Jamaica Inn* and *The Lady Vanishes*. With his longtime partner Frank Launder, he wrote an ignored gem, *The Rake's Progress* (called *The Notorious Gentleman* in the United States), which Gilliat directed. Among this film's other distinctions, Rex Harrison gives one of his best performances in it—a perfect match of role and actor.

"Tavernier told me it was thirty or forty years ahead of its time," says Gilliat. It was made in 1945, so it's now ripe for discovery. As, for different reasons, is *Projections*. •

Rooms of His Own

By Stephen Owen

Freer: A Legacy of Art
by Thomas Lawton and Linda Merrill

(Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, 272 pp., $49.50, $29.95 paper)

This is an extraordinary story: a random talent, haphazardly educated and furnished with wealth, finding his way to a painter of genius, then pursuing the tracks and connections into new areas, buying, always buying along the way. Out of this peculiar conjunction of money, accident and an ongoing private education in connoisseurship came the basis of one of our finest and quirkiest public collections of art, which is housed in the Freer Gallery in Washington.

The book is about Charles Lang Freer (1854-1919), a clerk with a seventh-grade education, who through luck and hard work built a fortune in the manufacture of railway cars. Onto this Horatio Alger legend is grafted a later story, which answers the question: What does Horatio do once his fortune is made? The answer is: he collects art; and that longer phase of his life can be illustrated through pictures of the wondrously beautiful objects that came into his hands, from famous Whistlers, to luminous pieces of Islamic glass, to Mughal miniatures, to Chinese Buddhist sculptures, to seventeenth-century Japanese screens. There are prehistoric pieces of carved jade, ancient bronzes, ceramics and scrolls. And there are paintings of strapping American women from the turn of the century, doing their best to look allegorical.

This book urges us to think about "collections." We often take collections of art to be assemblages of objects in space, arranged according to some rationale; but a collection is also an event, a history of quests, trouvailles and associative links, of which the assemblage of objects is nothing more than the remainder. The history of Freer's collection is as interesting as the assemblage that has been left for us. This is not usually the case, especially in the great museums with national, municipal or institutional names. Those museums often seek to be "representative"—as a history of art textbook seeks to be in its coverage. Such museums may build on their strengths and cut their losses in areas where they cannot compete; but at the same time a vision of "representative" order never quite leaves them.

I know of one such museum with a public name (a name I will not reveal) of which it was commonly said that it had the largest collection of second-rate Old Masters anywhere. Yet those obviously second-rate Old Masters claimed a "representative" portion of museum space roughly commensurate with the importance accorded the Old Masters in the history of art. Other parts of the collection, with much finer pieces, were allowed no more than their own representative space, with the result that many superior pieces were left in the warehouse that lies under most museums.

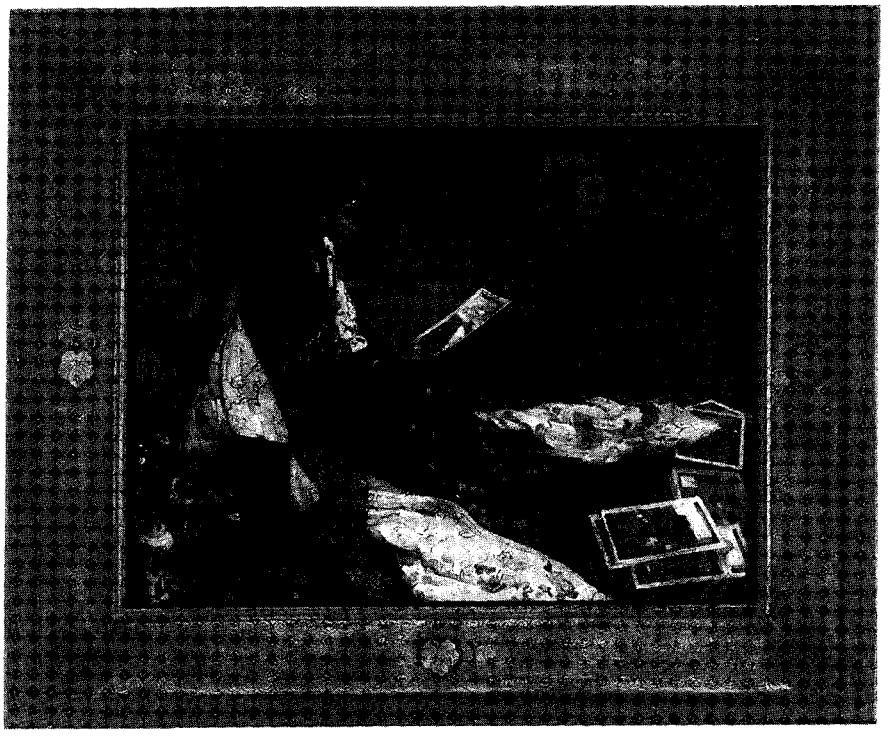
Charles Lang Freer's collection is something else altogether. It is the evolution of Freer's taste. Freer eventually developed an intense sense of the unity of his collection, yet the unity that he discovered was that of the eccentric connoisseur and not that of the art historian. Idiosyncratic connections and accidents in the history of acquisition are still visible in his collection. Even his obvious mistakes of judgment remain; and these contribute to, rather than detract from, the museum's character. Perhaps with some foresight, his deed of gift ensured that his collection—which was his own story—would not be entirely swallowed into the art historian's ratios of fair representation.

The latter part of the nineteenth century, when Freer began his collecting, was a peculiar moment in human history. Things and people traveled easily and widely for the first time. Equally important, money accompanied the human travelers with similar ease. Between the relative isolation of the first half of the nineteenth century and the global economy of the late twentieth century there was this brief century or so of adjustment, during which inequities of exchange provided unlikely individuals with immense financial power. In Freer's day the Old Masters, circulating in a limited territory and increasingly immured in museums, were already growing too expensive for any but the largest fortunes. More modest fortunes, like Freer's, could be deployed only on modern painters and non-Western art. But in both of these areas a modest fortune, used wisely and luckily, could accomplish a great deal.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In this context a minor railway tycoon from Detroit, with excellent advisers and a good eye, acquired not only the best collection of Whistlers, but also some of the finest pieces of Chinese and Japanese art. It goes without saying that in our contemporary world neither of those countries would have permitted such pieces to leave their territory legally. Moreover, one of those two countries now enjoys such private wealth that it could easily balance the account in the commercial exchange of art works. Freer's acquisitions in South Asian and Near Eastern art were hardly less impressive. Freer's two tracks in collecting—Asian art and American painting—overlapped through acknowledged influence and a visionary sense of affinity.

We see Whistler's explicit allusions to and inclusions of Asian art in his paintings, as in *Caprice in Purple and Gold: the Golden Screen* (1864), where the angular panels of a gilded Japanese screen form the background, and in the foreground sits a young woman of indeterminate race, draped in rich Japanese embroideries, examining a Japanese print, with other prints scattered over the floor. The painting is set in a thick, gilded frame, elaborately figured with Japanese designs. The screen and the prints—paintings within the painting—have the flatness of traditional Japanese art, against which the young woman in her robes is allowed to emerge, making use of perspective and the molded contours of drapery that characterize European art. But even though the drapery is molded in the Western style, the play of different embroidered fabrics in Whistler's painting alludes to the geisha prints and paintings of the ukiyo-e masters. We have, in this work of art, a "real" world defined by Western techniques of representing space, where the beautiful connoisseur (herself the object of the voyeur's gaze through the window of the frame) contemplates "art," defined by the flatness and the colors of traditional Japanese art.



CAPRICE IN PURPLE AND GOLD: THE GOLDEN SCREEN BY JAMES MCNEILL WHISTLER

The Freer collection contains the works that help us read Whistler's painting, such as the famous seventeenth-century screen *The Waves at Matsushima* by Sotatsu. Here the turbulently contoured waters already call into question the idea of flatness in traditional screen painting. In *Moonlight Revelry at the Dozō Sagami* by Utamaro (1753-1806), the artist plays with different colored fabrics in the very way that challenged Whistler's emulation in *Caprice in Purple and Gold.* Then we note that Utamaro uses Western-style perspective in this painting. Forming the background for the amusements of the geisha house, spread out like a screen, is a receding ocean vista. In fact, the Western landscape perspective in Utamaro's painting matches exactly the position of the flat Japanese screen in Whistler's painting. As Whistler places the woman with draperies molded in the European style in the foreground, Utamaro gives his foreground to traditional geisha figures. Both of these paintings are happy encounters between distinct traditions of art. And Freer's collection permits us to discover such mutual influences and surprising affinities.

Freer began modestly with Whistler's prints. He soon progressed to Whistler's paintings and then to Whistler himself, who saw in Freer the financial means to reassemble the best of what Whistler had himself dispersed in order to make a living. Acquisition and assembling was on everyone's mind. This is a fine instance, moreover, of the relation between artist and collector. How much did the undeniable quality of Whistler's paintings contribute to the quality of Freer's collection, and how much did the collector's devotion, with the wide publicity that attended on lavish patronage, contribute to the appreciation of Whistler and the solidification of his reputation?

To say that great artists go unappreciated for a period cannot be fully explained by the cliché that great artists stand in advance of contemporary taste. This commonplace of recent art serves primarily to grant to the later connoisseur and collector the power to re-evaluate a work, and in doing so, to send an artist's "stocks" soaring. In the fine arts, an aesthetic consensus reached through re-evaluation has a quick commercial confirmation. Imagine somewhere a wealthy "poem collector" whose mansion is stuffed full of books acquired for only a few dollars from used-book stores. Though the quality of the art he possesses may equal that of the collector of paintings, the poem collector could barely give his treasures to the local charitable book sale, much less make a bequest to the nation. He would be considered a wealthy eccentric rather than a wealthy connoisseur. Such a fantasy is humorous only because there is an affinity between the image of wealth and those objects that are "valuable" in more ways than one. It is a fine thing to appreciate an object that appreciates in return.

Freer gave his collection to the nation; it would be inaccurate and ungenerous to suggest that he had any intention of making money on it. Yet one suspects that investors do not love the money so much as the game. And collecting art retains all the elements of the stock market game, buying low and, if not actually selling high, knowing that one could sell high. In this sense Freer's collection was an excellent investment. If there is room for gloating in heaven, Freer must be enjoying some of the observations in the pages of this book—how he purchased some of the rarest and finest archaic Chinese jades for modest sums, while a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

richer tycoon like J. Pierpont Morgan could spend up to $50,000 on a Qing polychrome vase, which now quite possibly might be considered gaudy bric-a-brac.

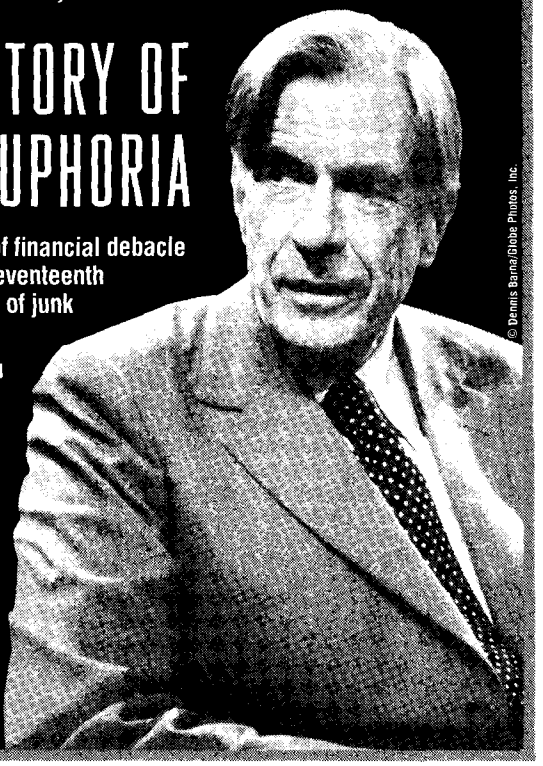
By now it should be obvious that in Freer's story we have something of an American allegory, in which the national hunger for culture blends seamlessly into a rag-to-riches adventure on the stock exchange. The collection becomes the judiciously selected "portfolio," which at the same time provides pleasure and confers prestige. Horatio Alger meets Oscar Wilde. And in this accumulation of a fortune in good taste there is no small element of nineteenth-century colonialism. This is not the English-flavored art collecting of Aurel Stein, hacking paintings out of the Dunhuang caves and carting them away as the booty of an empire. The American collector paid for what he took—and got a bargain. And this is not suggested as an occasion for hand-wringing guilt: any Chinese businessman would have done the same, and may well do so in the next century.

This book is absorbed in telling the story of the game of acquisition. The authors enjoy Freer's acquiring a particularly good piece almost as much as Freer himself probably did. It is infectious, and the reader shares in the excitement. Yet there are those (including most Asian governments, not to mention the governments of Greece, Egypt, Mexico and so on) who might feel a certain indignation regarding the wholesale appropriation of their national treasures. Such indignation has been codified institutionally in numerous laws regarding the export of antiquities and works of art.

This large question of cultural transfer deserves some reflection. We cannot entirely ignore the inequities or the disfigurements that occurred. When you are in a museum and see some lovely head or figure of a Chinese wall painting, you should keep in mind those full-wall murals in the Dunhuang caves with ugly rectangles of white, where some particularly fine bodhisattva caught the fancy of the brigand-connoisseur. But in a larger sense China, Japan and the other old cultures of Asia could easily afford the loss of some choice pieces; they have more than enough antiquities and art treasures remaining to weary the attention of even the most diligent schoolchildren for many generations to come. Especially for China and Japan, the phase of cultural transfer in which Freer participated may have been their unwitting investment in the creation of American culture, helping to shape in some small way the world into which

JOHN KENNETH GALBRAITH
tells it like it is, was, and will be.

A SHORT HISTORY OF FINANCIAL EUPHORIA



"Dourly irreverent analyses of financial debacle from the tulip craze of the seventeenth century to the recent plague of junk bonds." —*The Atlantic*

"With a humor so dry that you can almost hear it rattle and hiss, Professor Galbraith anatomizes the psychology that moves people to participate in [speculative] booms." —Christopher Lehmann-Haupt, *The New York Times*

VIKING
Penguin USA

At bookstores now

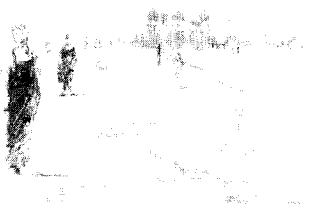
Figures in a Red Landscape

by Pilar Bonet

"Gives the reader a unique insight into the social, political, and above all human change in the [former] Soviet Union."—Juan T. Linz, Sterling Professor of Political and Social Sciences, Yale University

A newspaper editor from a village in the Urals fights to bring *glasnost* to the provinces. A group of peasants experiments with private agriculture. A model "Soviet Man" refuses to lose faith in socialism. An Orthodox priest describes his vision of tolerance for his vast country—two days before his violent assassination.

Pilar Bonet, Moscow correspondent for *El Pais*, offers a series of compelling portraits of ordinary—and extraordinary—Soviet citizens at a time of dramatic change.



$18.95 hardcover

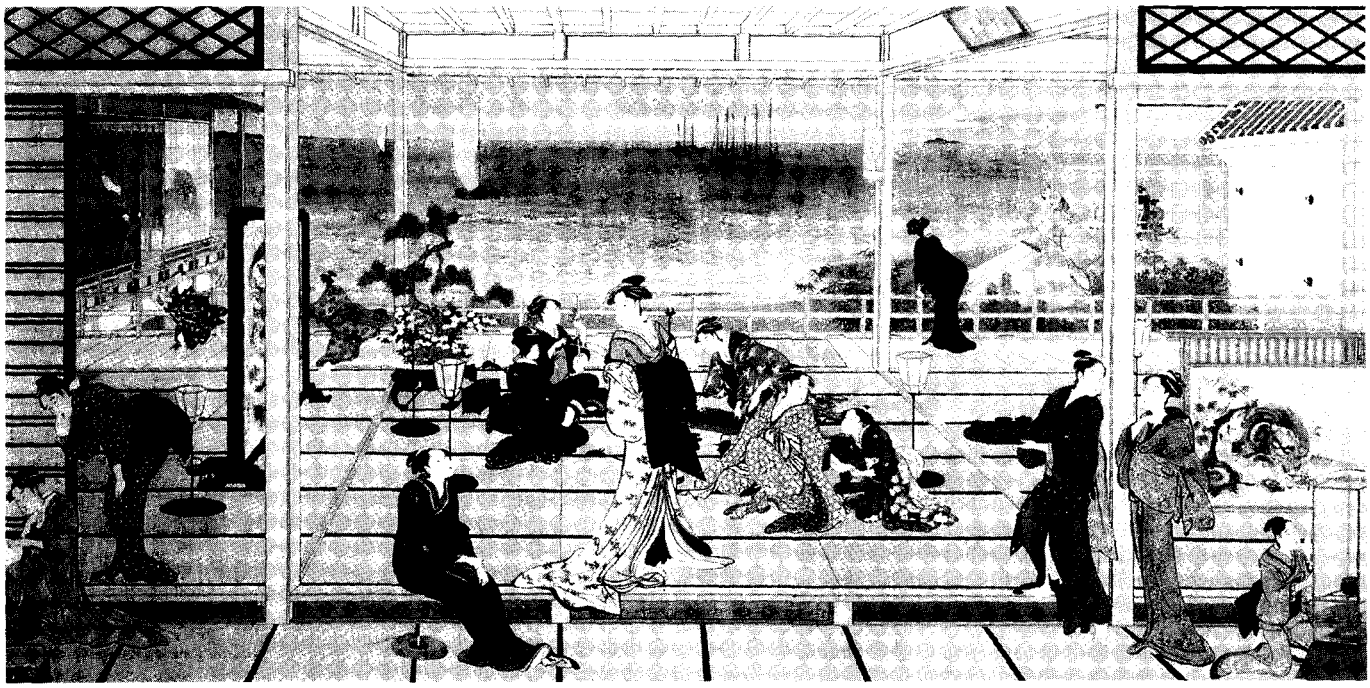
The Woodrow Wilson Center Press / The Johns Hopkins University Press
Hampden Station, Baltimore, MD 21211 • To order, call 1-800-537-5487.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

they sent so large a human investment in immigrants. In Freer's vision, those Asian works of art were participants rather than outsiders in the formation of American art.

Freer "composed" his collection, and he also oversaw the creation of the building where it was to be housed. The museum was to be a commodious space, in which works of art could be enjoyed at leisure. It was, and remains, a museum to free the viewer from the oppressive prospect of endless rooms and corridors, accessible only to those whose physical stamina is as powerful as their impulse to look. In his museum Freer meant to educate the American populace in "Beauty," in the wonderfully ahistorical nineteenth-century sense. That singular liberty of pleases them. This is delightfully obvious when you go to the Freer Gallery. There Whistler is not just another late nineteenth-century painter, whose once-bold experiments now seem part of a single, period-bound family. In the Peacock Room at the Freer, it is obvious that this Whistler is a later-born Tokugawa screen painter.

Collections must pass from the exciting and problematic process of acquisition to some physical space where they can be housed and displayed. Freer supervised the design of the interior space of his gallery, but he could not foresee how the larger space that contained it would change. The fate of that larger space is no less a national fable than the collector's work. At this point it paintings in that younger gallery are memorable, and the itinerary is a story that confirms most standard college introductions to the history of art. But behind this long walk through the National Gallery is also a story of American culture that is very different from the Freer's. Instead of art's freely chosen affinities, which is the message of the Freer, the National Gallery gives us the now official version of American culture, rising out of provinciality to become the inheritor and transformation of European art. This newer museum of 1941 belongs to an America preparing for World War II and for its status as a superpower. It is an America picking up the torch of both Empire and European Culture. If we imagine Freer's Whistlers



MOONLIGHT REVELRY AT DOZŌ SAGAMI BY KITAGAWA UTAMARO

vision gives us a sense of relations between works of art that are usually invisible in more "representatively" structured museums. Thus on the Mall in Washington we have one of America's greatest painters conjoined with Asian art, including those very kinds of work that inspired and contributed to Whistler's painting. Here, perhaps uniquely, we are permitted to see China and Japan as America's cultural parents. Such a genealogy may remain historically problematic, but it is important for us as a culture to entertain the possibility.

It is the special gift of the arts to create an overlay of improbable liaisons upon the family history of a culture. The arts can outwit any grim, conservative historical determinism. Poets, painters and musicians reach back in time or across cultures and choose whatever is important to observe that the Freer Gallery, opened to the public in 1923, was the *first* of the Smithsonian art galleries. Long closed for renovation, it has now been reopened, which is the occasion for this retrospective book. The renovated Freer retains much of its founder's original vision in tact; but the "neighborhood," like American culture itself, has been irrevocably changed.

In 1941, almost two decades after the Freer Gallery first opened, a new and much larger neighbor appeared on the other side of the Mall, the gift of a much richer patron. In this museum you start in Room #1, thirteenth- to fifteenth-century Italian art, and walk (if you have the stamina) sequentially through the centuries, back and forth across Europe. Eventually, by walking through British art, you finally reach American art. The here, in the American rooms of the National Gallery, we would see them very differently.

Time passes, and meanwhile, on the other side of the Mall, American culture continues to evolve in interesting ways. In Freer's original vision, his gallery would have contained American and Asian art in equal proportions. But his legacy permitted the continuing acquisition of Asian pieces, while his choices in American art, apart from his Whistlers, fell victim to inevitable changes in taste. The Asian collection grew threefold, with the consequence that in the present Freer Gallery, American art occupies less than a quarter of the exhibition space. Despite the banners proclaiming "America Meets Asia" and despite the wonderful Whistlers, the museum has become predominantly a museum of Asian art.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Next to the Freer we have another gallery of Asian art, the Sackler, and connected to it, the National Museum of African Art. The neighborhood has changed: instead of educating the American populace in universal "Beauty," the Freer Gallery has become part of the non-European section of the Mall, containing those traditions excluded from the historical itinerary of the National Gallery (except for Mr. Whistler, who has lived in the neighborhood a long time and does not intend to move).

In all fairness we must acknowledge that the Hirshhorn Museum of "contemporary" art also lives over here on the same side of the Mall as the non-Europeans. It's livelier on this side, and the architecture is particularly good. In future centuries, however, it may become difficult to stretch the definition of "modern" or "contemporary" to apply to the Hirshhorn's pieces. And as old bohemians sometimes join the establishment in middle age, select works may quietly move to new quarters across the Mall, continuing the art-historical narrative of the National Gallery.

However radical or experimental it may be, modern art and contemporary art can be "placed." Nobody would ever mistake the century or the artistic lineage to which such works, in all their wild variety, belong. We can even read changes through this century with some precision. These subtle signatures of historical era and lineage can ultimately be assimilated to the cultural system represented by the National Gallery. And any beautiful object that cannot be historically "placed" within this cultural system must be given a separate space, gathered with objects of its own kind. For this reason, the Freer Gallery is particularly precious: it preserves the traces of an alternative vision of art, one in which relationships between historically disparate works are discovered as primary. And we had Freer's gallery, with the American artist and his Chinese and Japanese ancestors, before we had the National Gallery.

STEPHEN OWEN is professor of Chinese and comparative literature at Harvard University.

Us and Them

BY STANLEY HOFFMANN

On Human Diversity: Nationalism, Racism and Exoticism in French Thought by Tzvetan Todorov translated by Catherine Porter

(Harvard University Press, 424 pp., $49.95)

Tzvetan Todorov is one of the most interesting contemporary writers. He is better known for his works on literary theory than for his essays on political and social thought. This imbalance should be changed by the translation of his master work in that latter realm, published in France in 1989 as *Nous et les autres*, "Us and Them," which gives a fuller and more suggestive idea of the book than its American title does. But will it? Todorov's book did not receive as much attention in France as it deserved, probably because of what are its greatest virtues. It proclaims no New (or Old) Truth. While it constitutes an admirable defense of humanism and liberalism, it does so undogmatically and, if there is such a word, unshrilly.

Todorov writes with modesty and elegance. And while his book is a rigorous and highly critical treatment of a large number of classical and modern French thinkers, the analysis of their ideas, the display of their contradictions and their absurdities, is so subtle, so respectful of their intentions, so moderate in tone that it takes a close reading to see how devastating it really is. At a time, in France, when the reaction against Marxism takes the form of an often simple-minded rediscovery of liberalism, and the preferred mode of "discourse" is slash-and-burn, a book about political and social thought in which Marx is never even mentioned, a book whose liberalism is genuine and therefore undogmatic, whose tone is gentle and civilized, could not expect to provoke one of those intense but finally banal French controversies that illuminate the sky like fireworks for a few incandescent weeks and then disappear into the darkness that lasts until the next display.

Perhaps this book will have a more lasting impact here; but Todorov's concerns are not exactly attuned to the American obsessions of the moment. What are his concerns? First, the nature of evil. In his foreword, he tells us about his own experience of evil. He is a Bulgarian intellectual who was, in his youth, a supporter of the Communist regime in his country; but he soon became disillusioned, and resorted to the usual separation between public "submission" and private freedom of thought. This experience led him to publish, in 1991, a fine book about ethics and the totalitarian experience, *Face à l'extrême*.

His second concern, which some years ago inspired a remarkable book on the conquest of America, is "us and them," sameness and otherness. In the France of the 1980s, where he was living as an increasingly "integrated" alien, and where a heated debate about immigration, citizenship and national identity mobilized politicians and writers, not always toward the most uplifting of ideas and slogans, Todorov set out to examine what French writers had had to say on human diversity—on the multiplicity of cultures, nations and races, on the tension between the idea of universal values and the reality of conflicting customs, traditions and what Erik Erikson used to call "pseudo-species." This inquiry was a way of coming to terms with his adopted country, of thinking about the consequences of ideologies, of wondering about "the possibility of making judgments across frontiers."

Todorov has a powerful thirst for ethics. As an immigrant in France, he discovered that his French colleagues had political convictions but not ethical convictions; that their opinions had little to do with their actions (the latter were petit bourgeois, the former were revolutionary); that social science was being impoverished by the erasure of its fundamental difference from natural science. What distinguishes social science, or should distinguish it, is that it involves people studying people, and so its facts and its values are inseparable. "How can one deal with what is human," Todorov asks, "without taking a position?"

For this reason, he says, he came to prefer the political and moral essay to social science; and *On Human Diversity* is a perfect essay. There are five parts to the book. The first deals with "the universal and the relative." Are there universal values, or are all values relative? Here Todorov focuses on Pascal, Diderot, Condorcet, Montaigne, Helvetius, Renan and Lévi-Strauss. The second part

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

treats what he calls racialism. Racism is a matter of behavior, he argues, but racialism is an ideology that proclaims the existence of races, the necessary link between physical and moral features, the determining influence of ethnicity on the individual and the existence of a particular hierarchy of values. In the racialist view of the world, there are superior and inferior races—and hence there is the need for a policy based on knowledge of the "facts" about races. Here Todorov moves from Buffon to Renan, Le Bon, Taine and the inevitable but paradoxical Gobineau, who believed both that a society should be judged on its ability to form a civilization by absorbing and subjugating other peoples, and that a race, as soon as it loses the purity of its blood, is doomed to decline.

The third part deals with nationalism. For Todorov, the modern nation is a fusion of two distinct elements: a culture (common customs and memories) and a polity (state and citizenship). Also, the idea of the nation has two faces. Its "internal" face is egalitarian and integrative: all of "us" form the Nation, whose mission it is to transcend class and regional cleavages. Its "external" face is quite the opposite: "we" are different from "them." Todorov focuses on the choice, so keenly felt and described by Rousseau, between being a human being and being a citizen.

At first sight the fourth part of Todorov's discussion seems more literary. Its subject matter is exoticism, the fascination with "the other," which is usually based on "lack of knowledge" of the other. Beginning with Homer's and Amerigo Vespucci's praise of "the remote," Todorov turns to Montaigne, to the myth of the noble savage as it appears in the writings of the early eighteenth-century Baron de Lahontan (but not, he maintains, in Rousseau), and then to Chateaubriand, to the popular fin-de-siècle novelist Pierre Loti (whose *Madame Chrysanthème* was the source of *Madama Butterfly*), to the twentieth-century traveler and poet Victor Segalen and finally to Artaud. This section ends with a witty typology of ten kinds of "exoticists," ranging from the "assimilator" to the "philosopher" who (following Rousseau's advice) observes "differences in order to discover properties." I particularly savored Todorov's description of the exile, who "is not particularly interested in the people among whom he lives" and cherishes his distance from them (Descartes in Holland is his example). And then his book closes with a section on "moderation." It contains a fine essay on Montesquieu, the thinker who made "the most successful effort within the French tradition to conceptualize the diversity of peoples and the unity of the human race at one and the same time," and it ends with Todorov's own conclusions.

Let us follow his distinction between journey and arrival. In his long exploration of French writings, Todorov encounters and points out a variety of enemies. One of them, the most familiar, is ethnocentrism, according to which there are universal values, and they happen to be mine: those of my religion (Pascal) or those of my nation (Michelet). The discussion of one variant of ethnocentrism, Tocqueville's views on colonialism, is particularly fine. As a believer in racial equality, and in the Christian idea that "all men are born equal," Tocqueville condemned the treatment of Indians and blacks by the whites in America, and he recognized the evils of colonialism in general; but as a French patriot who saw in national feeling an antidote to the "democratic individualism," or civic indifference that he feared, Tocqueville treated French colonialism in Algeria as "necessary to the strength and greatness of France," defended discrimination between Europeans and natives and approved French policies of repression. As Todorov puts it, "Universal morality stops at the threshold of international relations," because there is no code of rules and rights that constrains states in an anarchic milieu—"which amounts to saying that the only principle governing behavior between states is nationalism."

A second enemy is "scientism," which Todorov deems more dangerous than ethnocentrism, "for people are not usually proud of being ethnocentric, whereas one can take pride in professing a 'scientific' philosophy." This sin takes many forms: Diderot's attempt to found morality on nature, to base "'what must be' [a correct translation would be: 'what should be'] on what 'is,'" thus "eliminating any need for morality"; Condorcet's conviction that universal principles of justice exist, from which laws applicable to all humanity, as well as the idea of a world state, can be directly derived; Le Bon's racialism, whose pseudo-scientific assertion of ineradicable inequalities proved, in his view, the vanity of "natural" universal ethics; Renan's faith in the victory of science over religion, which he equated with the victory of the Aryan race over the Semites, and his vision of science ruling mankind by putting force—in the form of terror, eugenics and modern weaponry—at the service of reason (an anticipation of totalitarianism that, he prophetically announced, would be particularly suited to "the genius of Germany").

As Todorov points out, this celebration of scientific reason, in Renan as previously in Saint-Simon and Comte, became an ersatz religion. But scientism is only one aspect of a third enemy: determinism. Todorov reviews the pseudo-scientific determinism of Taine, for whom the individual was shaped by race and milieu, and for whom there is no difference between causality in nature and in the social world; he also examines the racialist determinism of Barrès, who proclaimed that the individual was the product of the soil and of blood, and that Dreyfus, being a Jew, had to be a traitor, and Zola, being a foreigner, had to be a foe of the French nation. In an acute analysis of Michelet, Todorov demonstrates that even that great historian, who thought that social evolution in France had entailed a doubly progressive mixing of races that had emancipated the French from physical determination, allowed his nationalism to lead him to a "determinism of being French."

The next enemy is primitivism, or the enthusiasm for "others" insofar as they embody the virtues that contemporary civilization has allegedly lost. He focuses on Lévi-Strauss's deep dislike for humanism, which the famous anthropologist accuses of having wanted to organize the world around Man, thus separating man from nature and (a link that Todorov denies) leading to the horrors of modern totalitarianism. Lévi-Strauss believes that communication among cultures leads to homogenization and decadence. Todorov does not. And then there is egocentrism, which proliferates among exoticists: Chateaubriand wandering among the natives in America, and later among the Muslims of the Near East, obsessed with himself, his ennui, his feelings and his sensations. For Todorov, he is the rather unedifying prototype of the modern tourist. And when egocentrism merged with racialism and eroticism, the result was the rather nauseating brew of Pierre Loti, whose "life is oriented toward a single goal: to collect ... impressions," whose fictional mistresses are his native slaves and whose novels "become the guided tour to his collection": foreign cultures are not Loti's subject, they are only the pretext for the sensations that they create in him.

Finally there is the shoal of relativism. Todorov shows that it, too, takes many forms: Montaigne's tolerant conservatism, Helvetius's utilitarianism, Barrès's hatred of Kant's universal rules, Lévi-Strauss's assertion that there is no philosophical and material criterion that

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

would allow us to judge societies. What offends Todorov, and rightly, is the elimination of moral judgment, which is so often the result of relativism. One should distinguish, of course, between descriptive relativism and normative relativism; and it is only the latter that Todorov rejects. He deems normative relativism fundamentally untenable: it is contradictory, since it presents itself "as absolute truth and thus ... undermines what [it] is in the process of asserting." It is also often inconsistent, as in the case of Montaigne, whose relativism barely conceals his true ideal, which was Greek civilization and values, or in the case of Barrès, who opposed, as a relativist and a determinist, any uprooting, even the uprooting of colonized peoples for the purpose of their absorption by France, but who, as a nationalist, encouraged France's colonizing mission anyhow. Above all, "the consistent relativist writes off the unity of the human species ... the absence of unity allows exclusion, which can lead to extermination." Moreover, the relativist "cannot denounce any injustice, any violence that may happen to be part of some tradition other than his own."

Thus we arrive at Todorov's own philosophy. It begins with a conviction and an act of faith, already present in Rousseau: that mankind is endowed with freedom and reason; that we are perfectible; that the just is not the same as the useful or the "natural"; that ethics is autonomous and its principles are universal; that what is does not tell us what should be, or else force would triumph.

Todorov provides an interpretation of Rousseau that recognizes the tragic nature of the tension, in Rousseau's work, between humanity and nationality, between "men" and "citizens," but asserts that for him justice and humanitarian virtues are "on the side of humanity" and "that man must be placed above citizen." (I am not sure that I agree entirely with such a reading of the author of *The Social Contract* and of *Emile*.) The other deity in Todorov's philosophical pantheon is Montesquieu. Though the principles of natural law that he listed in the *Spirit of the Laws* contain no absolutes and have little substance, his works grew out of two fundamental convictions. One is that despotism is an absolute evil—and a formidable one, because it can manifest itself in every sphere of life, private or public, and because it results from the dark side of human nature. Montesquieu's was, already, that "liberalism of fear" that Judith Shklar, that great contemporary liberal without illusions, incisively proposed. His other conviction is that moderation is an essential value, precisely because of the inevitable diversity among, but also within, cultures and nations, and also because of the need for checks and balances to prevent any single interest or power from crushing others. On this point, Todorov finds Montesquieu preferable to Rousseau, who rejected the separation of powers when he wrote about the state, and whose notion of the general will was unitary, indivisible and hostile to particular interests.

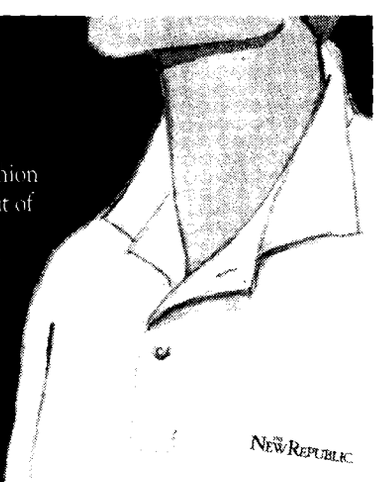
Though he believed in universal values of fairness, decency and moderation, Montesquieu was fascinated by diversity. Todorov, while recognizing diversity, is above all aware of the horrors that the distinction between "us" and "them" has bred in the last 150 years. He points out that some of the forms of the cult of diversity—nationalism, racism and exoticism—as well as one form of universalism—scientism—are all examples of what Louis Dumont called holism, or the prevalence of the group over the individual. In Todorov's view, the decline of religion and the spread of individualism have left a void that totalitarianism and the "idolatry of science" have filled. The right way to contain holism is to preserve individualism, but also to fill that void with "the great ethical principles around which the democratic consensus is formed."

Todorov's "well-tempered humanism" rejects indignantly the notion that European humanism led necessarily to colonialism because it was inherently ethnocentric, and also to totalitarianism. Colonialism had multiple origins (greed was one of them), and totalitarianism's origins are to be found—at least in the case of fascism and Nazism—in nineteenth-century *anti*-Enlightenment thinking, from de Maistre to the racialists. Todorov recognizes that scientism and ethnocentrism are "deformations" of universalism, but he thinks that we can avoid both without surrendering universality. "What is universal is our belonging to the same species: that is not very much, but it is enough to serve as a basis for our judgments," for the comparison of cultures and institutions, for the absolute condemnation of tyranny and totalitarianism.

The opposition between tyranny and moderation, which connects Todorov not only to Montesquieu but also to Raymond Aron, is obviously related to Todorov's attempt at finding a way out of the tension between nationalism and cosmopolitanism that so starkly and violently dominates the current world

THE NEW REPUBLIC
POLO SHIRT

The New Republic is proud to present the ultimate fashion statement: *The New Republic* Polo shirt. Fashioned out of 100% cotton and custom embroidered with our logo, *The New Republic* polo will become the staple of your casual wardrobe. It also makes the perfect gift for TNR aficionados on your shopping list. *The New Republic* polo is available in crisp white with the logo embroidered in navy blue, in adult sizes small, medium, large and extra large. Only $24.50 per shirt plus $3.25 for first class shipping. Satisfaction guaranteed! Order yours today.



Name _____
Phone _____
Shipping Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

To order, call toll-free
1-800-875-9151
(M-F, 9-5 EST)

Qty. ____ Size (S,M,L,XL) ____ Total Price _____

If using Visa, MC or AMEX, please provide the following information:
Account Number _____ Expiration Date _____
Signature _____

Mail this form along with check or money order made payable to
TNR Polo Shirt Offer, 1220 19th St, N.W., Suite 600, Washington, D.C. 20036

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

scene. Todorov believes that the cultural element of the modern nation is "a path that leads to universalism—by deepening the specificity of the particular within which one dwells," whereas "civic nationalism ... is a preferential choice for one's country against others. Thus it is an anti-universalist choice." It is the latter that is incompatible with humanism, especially when it pretends to be humanism; and it is the latter that led to colonialism, and to the nationalist wars of this century. Thus Todorov thinks that we need to dissociate "cultural nationalism"—belonging to a culture is a source of strength for the individual—from "civic nationalism," which mutilates the individual. We need to be members of a culture *and* of humanity.

I share Todorov's conviction that the kind of nationalism that substitutes a false ethic of "us vs. them" for an ethic of universal values is to be fought. I am less certain that the dissociation of culture and polity is easily achievable. The two have been so effectively blended in modern nation-states that any culture that feels threatened clings more ardently than ever to its state, and demands its *protection*. Cultures that feel oppressed demand a state for their survival. I am skeptical that cultural distinctiveness is the most reliable path to universalism (just reading Fichte makes one dubious). And I do not agree that civic patriotism must always lead to the exacerbated "us vs. them" nationalism that developed, say, in the feverish and besieged France of the Revolution, or in the wounded France that, after losing its war with Prussia, sought compensations in colonialism. Some forms of civic patriotism do respect minorities, foreigners and human rights.

And yet, in a world of rival states and struggling nations, the wrong kind of civic nationalism is all too common, and its blend with the nation-as-culture all too hard. The path toward the reconciliation of Man and Citizen leads both to an opening of ethnocentric national cultures *and* to a gradual loosening of citizenship, to a splitting of the obligations of citizenship, and perhaps also of the loyalties attached to citizenship at various levels of political institutions, below and above the state. It is, in sum, a difficult road.

At the end of this ghastly century, the existence of tyrannical regimes is perhaps beginning to be challenged by widely shared norms of human rights: the collapse of Soviet totalitarianism has been a spectacular leap forward. But optimism may be premature. It is certainly offset by the new vitality of rabid nationalisms—which Todorov, who wrote his book several years ago, did not anticipate. These new (but very old) nationalisms have exposed the poverty of cosmopolitanism, in values and in institutions, and the gravity of that tension between Man and Citizen about which Rousseau and Kant—but not Montesquieu, writing in the pre-nationalist age—worried so deeply and so legitimately.

Todorov's voice is the reasonable voice of the cosmopolitan exile. It is a voice that, so far, the screams of nationalist, xenophobic and racialist prejudice often succeed in drowning out. Still, at the end of the day, when the atrocities in Bosnia and elsewhere make one despair of human perfectibility, of moderation, of a universal moral law based on reason, reading so fine, learned and humane a book is, if not a consolation, at least a relief. Why are there so few Todorovs among the intellectuals of today?

STANLEY HOFFMANN is Dillon Professor of the Civilization of France at Harvard University. He is co-editor of the recently published *After the Cold War: International Institutions and State Strategies in Europe, 1989-1991* (Harvard University Press).

Through a Verse Darkly

BY CHRISTOPHER MAURER

Trilce
by César Vallejo
translated by Clayton Eshleman
Spanish text established by Julio Ortega
(Marsilio, 276 pp., $28, $14 paper)

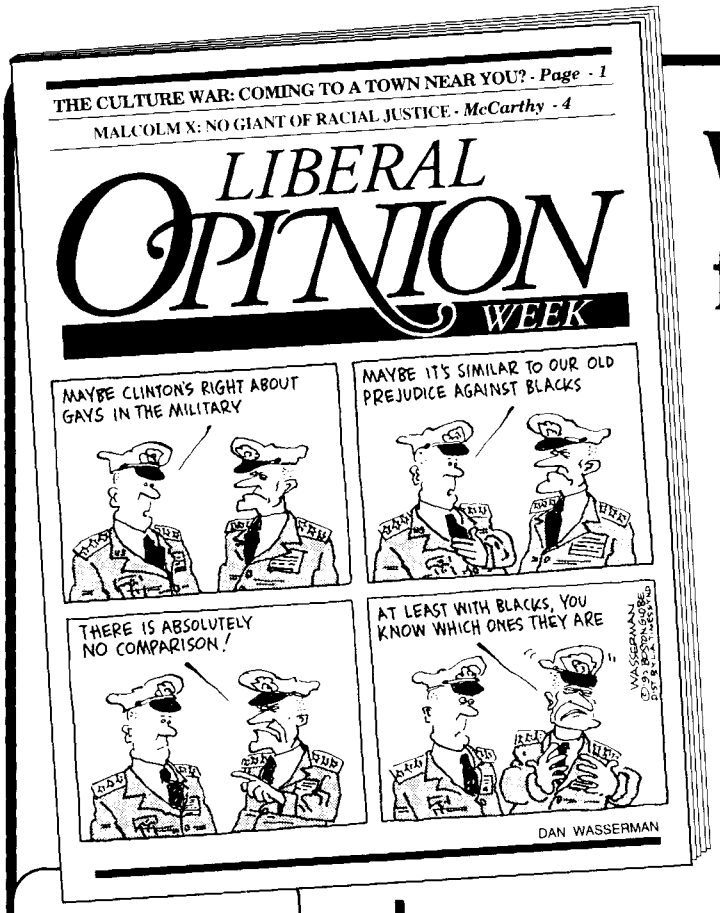
Trilce
by César Vallejo
translated by Rebecca Seiferle
(Sheep Meadow Press, 171 pp., $12.95 paper)

On the back cover of Rebecca Seiferle's new translation of *Trilce*, her editor Stanley Moss reports that "Seiferle is a New Mexican poet uniquely suited to the hazards of this translation"; and inside the book he acknowledges that Seiferle "sometimes takes risks others would think foolish." Clayton Eshleman, whose translation was published a few months after Seiferle's, on the 100th anniversary of Vallejo's birth, imagines those risks somewhat differently: a "*Trilce* translator" is "a kind of ringmaster in a circus, with levels of sound and shades of meaning like a herd of horses whose movements and performances must be synchronized." If there were actuaries of translation, Eshleman would be a high risk: he is less a synchronizing ringmaster than a prodigious verbal stunt man. Given her tenuous hold on the Spanish language, Seiferle would be nearly uninsurable.

But what is *Trilce*? It is the irreducible, almost unreadable masterpiece of the Peruvian César Vallejo (1892-1938), one of the greatest and least known poets of the century. It is a book of seventy-seven poems that defend their own mystery more stubbornly and proudly than any poems in the Spanish language. The title itself is an untranslatable neologism, one of many in a book that pushes Spanish to its syntactical and lexical breaking point. The word *Trilce* is both a combination of *triste* (sad) and *dulce* (sweet) and an evocation of three-ness, as in *triple*. (Numbers, odd and even, are one of Vallejo's obsessions as a poet.)

What *Trilce* is "about" is not easy to say. Like all great poetry, it was designed to survive paraphrase, and these poems range from the manageably mysterious to the truly hermetic. Vallejo compares his verses to crystal waiting to be "swallowed down whole" by future readers: "This crystal waits to be sipped / in the rough by a future mouth / without teeth . . . / This crystal is bread yet to come. // It wounds when they force it / and no longer shows animal affection" (Eshleman). One of *Trilce*'s earliest explicators, Vallejo's Peruvian friend Juan Espejo Asturrizaga, tried hard to connect the poems with the incidents

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED


THE CULTURE WAR: COMING TO A TOWN NEAR YOU? - Page - 1
MALCOLM X: NO GIANT OF RACIAL JUSTICE - McCarthy - 4
LIBERAL OPINION WEEK
MAYBE CLINTON'S RIGHT ABOUT GAYS IN THE MILITARY
MAYBE IT'S SIMILAR TO OUR OLD PREJUDICE AGAINST BLACKS
THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO COMPARISON!
AT LEAST WITH BLACKS, YOU KNOW WHICH ONES THEY ARE
DAN WASSERMAN

Will It Be as Good for You as It Was for Him?

Watch Clinton perform on sex issues.

Follow the debate on:

- gays in the military • abortion counseling
- removing HIV infection as a bar to immigration
- fetal tissue transplants
- lifting the RU-486 ban • AIDS research

Only ONE publication can give you this many liberal columnists and cartoonists every week–52 weeks a year!

FEATURED COLUMNISTS
EVERY COLUMN, EVERY WORD
Mary McGrory, Richard Cohen
Jesse Jackson, Calvin Trillin
David Broder, Coretta Scott King
Ralph Nader, Ellen Goodman
Linda Ellerbee, Mark Russell
David Nyhan, Michael Kinsley
Neal Peirce, Lars-Erik Nelson
Art Buchwald, Russell Baker
Nat Hentoff, Clarence Page
Dave Barry, Anna Quindlen
Cynthia Tucker

CONTRIBUTING COLUMNISTS
SELECTED COLUMNS WEEKLY, IN FULL
Molly Ivins, Les Payne
Andy Rooney, James Hoagland
Colman McCarthy, Robert Reno
Anthony Lewis, Mike Royko
Christopher Matthews
Carl Rowan, Germond & Witcover
Murray Kempton, William Raspberry
William Schnaider, Hobart Rowen
William Pfaff, Jimmy Breslin
Jack Anderson & Michael Binstein

CONTRIBUTING CARTOONISTS
Jules Feiffer, 'Herblock'
Duane Powell, Mark Stamaty
Tom Toles, Dan Wasserman
Jeff Danziger, Steve Sack
Paul Conrad, Mike Lane
Bill Schorr, Rob Rogers
Doug Marlette, Jim Borgman
Mike Luckovich, Mike Peters
Taylor Jones

Look to ***Liberal Opinion Week*** to bring you nearly all of America's most influential liberal columnists—the pundits who will play a major role in shaping the course of the new national agenda.

In a single publication, you can follow every column, every word, of such perceptive writers as Mary McGrory, David Nyhan, David Broder, Lars-Erik Nelson, Linda Ellerbee, Michael Kinsley, Richard Cohen and Ellen Goodman.

You can also enjoy a look at the lighter side with such humorists as Dave Barry, Art Buchwald, Mark Russell, Mike Royko, Calvin Trillin and Russell Baker.

In all, ***Liberal Opinion Week*** brings you some 40 of America's finest syndicated newspaper columnists. You won't want to miss their observations and assessments.

Plus, from the drawing board you will find our lineup of editorial cartoonists including Jules Feiffer, Mark Stamaty, Tom Toles, Dan Wasserman, Jim Borgman, Mike Luckovich, 'Herblock,' Mike Peters, Paul Conrad and a host of others.

Stay informed with ***Liberal Opinion Week,*** a 32-page tabloid with no advertising.

If you are not completely satisfied, we will return a full refund on all unmailed copies at any time, for any reason.

Introductory Offer – 13 Weekly Issues for $9.75

Not available on newsstands.

TO ORDER, RETURN COUPON OR CALL **1-800-338-9335**

LIBERAL OPINION WEEK
P.O. BOX 468-B VINTON, IA 52349

☐ YES: Send a 13-week introductory subscription for $9.75
☐ Send a 1-year subscription (52 weekly issues) for $39.00

Name _____
Address _____
_____ Apt. _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____

☐ Check enclosed
☐ Bill me ☐ VISA ☐ MC
Card # _____
Exp. _____

(Foreign postage add $25.00, $6.50 for 13-week offer.)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and the "animal affections" of Vallejo's early life in Peru: a four-month imprisonment for having helped instigate public disorders; the death of his parents, a brother and a girlfriend; a return to the empty house where he spent his childhood; the end of his relationship with a woman pregnant with his child. But Vallejo's revision of *Trilce* shows that he wanted to remove his poems from the realm of explanatory anecdote and from the ash of his own existence. To a large and sometimes frustrating extent, he succeeded.

The youngest of eleven children, Vallejo spent his earliest years in Santiago de Chuco, a village in the mountains of north-central Peru. His critics have made much of his ancestry, which was mixed. Both of his grandfathers were Spanish Jesuits; both of his grandmothers, Chimú Indians. He left Santiago in 1910 to attend school, and for the next decade he studied law and literature, philosophy and poetry, and earned a living as a schoolteacher, tutor and bookkeeper's assistant on a sugar plantation. He graduated from the university in 1915, with a thesis on "Romanticism in Spanish Poetry," in which he complains that Peruvian poetry has lost its own "sincere" voice.

Vallejo's mother died in 1918, a year before he published his first book of poems, *The Black Heralds*. That book opens with a bleak assessment of the human condition, one that all readers of Hispanic poetry can recite by heart. "Hay golpes en la vida, tan fuertes ... Yo no sé! ... / Golpes como del odio de Dios; como si ante ellos, / la resaca de todo lo sufrido se empozara en el alma": There are blows in life so hard ... I just don't know! / Blows as from God's hatred; as if, before them, / the backwash of everything suffered / welled up in the soul (translated by Richard Schaaf and Kathleen Ross). Those "blows," Vallejo wrote, are "the black heralds Death sends us." Not the least of them is God's indifference to human suffering. In the shadow of Nietzsche, whom he read as a student, the young Vallejo points an accusatory "deicidal finger": "My God, if you had been a man, / today you would know how to be God."

The Black Heralds and *Trilce*, which appeared in 1922, are the only books of poetry published in Vallejo's lifetime. The first was received with benevolence; the second, with silence and condescension. In a letter to a friend in 1923, Vallejo complains that *Trilce*

> has fallen into a total void. I am responsible for the book. I assume complete responsibility for its aesthetics. Today, perhaps more than ever, I sense an until now unknown and sacred obligation gravitating over me as a man and as an artist: to be free! ... In being free, I sometimes feel surrounded by the most frightening ridicule, like a child who mistakenly lifts his spoon up to his nose.

In search of that freedom he abandoned Peru for Paris, where he mingled with Lipschitz, Gris and Picasso, and where, as Pablo Neruda once remarked, "no one was ever more of a foreigner." Vallejo's letters from Paris, which have not yet been translated into English, chronicle his humiliating battles with poverty and illness. Publishing few poems, he supported himself on a student scholarship from the Peruvian government (he pretended to be studying law at the University of Madrid), and by writing for Spanish and Latin American newspapers. Several trips to Madrid, where he was received warmly but unhelpfully by García Lorca, and where Spanish friends published the second edition of *Trilce* in 1930, did little to relieve his poverty. He felt that he was living on crumbs, "under the banquet table of the bourgeoisie."

By the late 1920s his letters and newspaper articles reflected a growing interest in Marxism, a perfect hatred of his own plight and a rejection of Latin American oligarchy:

> It seems to me that we need rage, we need a huge wave of destruction to cover all that exists in [America]. One must destroy, and destroy oneself. This cannot, should not go on. And because there are no leaders we can count on, we ought to gather ourselves into a tight bundle of wounded, indignant people and explode, blasting to smithereens everything around us, everything within reach.

Travel to Russia, where Vallejo interviewed Mayakovski, led him to meditate in newspaper articles and notebooks about the role of art in Marxist society and the possibilities for a poetry of social commitment.

But how could the hermeticism of *Trilce* or the aestheticism of *The Black Heralds* be reconciled with socialist art? Vallejo never answered that question. Unlike Neruda, he tried not to use poetry as a vehicle of propaganda. Prose was another matter. A realist novel, *Tungsten*, published in Madrid in 1931 (it was translated into English by Robert Mezey in 1988), and *Lock-Out*, a proletarian play, were two attempts to write something with social relevance. In the final scene of *Tungsten*, a band of disfranchised miners are conspiring with an indigenous "savior" to overthrow the gringos. The narrator remarks gravely, in an unintended parody of socialist literature: "Outside, the wind was rising, portending storm."

One storm rising in the 1930s was the Spanish Civil War. Vallejo worked tirelessly on behalf of the Republic and became a militant member of the Spanish Communist Party. He died in Paris of an intestinal infection in 1938, at the age of 46, bitterly certain that the Republic would soon be crushed. In 1939, with Franco's forces approaching Barcelona, Republican soldiers at the monastery of Montserrat hand-printed copies of *Spain Take This Cup from Me*, one of the two major books of poetry that came out of the Spanish struggle. (The other was Neruda's *Spain in the Heart*.) In it, Vallejo imagines Spain as the mother of all humanity. Even in his political poetry, one of his favorite images is orphanhood.

At his death, most of Vallejo's poems were still in manuscript. A year later his widow, Georgette Philippart, published his Paris poems under the title *Poemas humanos* and set off decades of acrimonious debate about every conceivable aspect of the textual history of Vallejo's work. For more than thirty years she prevented scholars from working with the manuscripts. Some of Vallejo's papers were lost at her death in 1984. Others were donated to an orphanage in Lima. It was not until 1988 that the Vallejo scholar Américo Ferrari was able to publish a critical edition of the collected poems.

Of the works that survive—poems, stories, articles, notebooks, novels, the plays that he had shown to García Lorca—the greatest is *Trilce*, and the new translations by Seiferle and Eshleman are its first complete versions in English. Previous selections published by Henry Gifford and Charles Tomlinson, Reginald Gibbons, David Smith, H. R. Hays and others were less careful and knowledgable than Eshleman's. Seiferle is a newcomer to Vallejo, but Eshleman has been translating him for decades; in 1968 Grove Press published his *Human Poems*, and an expanded version, *The Complete Posthumous Poetry*, in collaboration with José Rubia Barcía, won a National Book Award in 1979.

Because the poems are difficult and often obscure, editions of Vallejo tend to be collective affairs, and Eshleman's is no exception. Julio Ortega, with whom Eshleman collaborated on early drafts, edits the Spanish text, with few errata. Ferrari contributes a lucid introduction, José Miguel Oviedo a Vallejo chronology and Eshleman a rather self-centered "Note to the Translations" as well as an "Afterword" in which Vallejo is psychoanalyzed as a "self-created orphan."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Much of the burden of *Trilce*," he writes, "is the transformation of a mother-son, via a lover, into an orphan-poet who has foetal and phallic status at the same time." Except for Eshleman's unbearable prattle about "Vallejo's foetal life," this is a helpful book. Its versions are careful enough to be used by students and imaginative enough (as Ferrari writes) to carry on "the movement and the gesture of freedom from which [Trilce] was born."

A sentence from one of Vallejo's early letters gives us a clue to the sort of poetic freedom that Ferrari is talking about, and to the much-debated aesthetic genealogy of *Trilce*. From Lima, Vallejo writes to a group of friends: "Oh holy, ideal elasticity of Symbolism! Oh modern, lyrical France!" Vallejo's encounter with Fernando Fortún and Enrique Díez Canedo's anthology of French poetry in Spanish translation, which appeared in Madrid in 1913 and became the primer of an entire generation of Hispanic poets, was one of the central events in his aesthetic development. Vallejo admired "whimsical, suggestive vagueness," and he found it in Paul Verlaine, whose "Art Poétique" appears in that anthology, and he imitated it in more or less conventional ways in *The Black Heralds*: "Oh Moon, perhaps you are my gypsy heart / that wanders in the blue, weeping verses!" (H. R. Hays). Symbolism and Verlaine are reckoned with more radically in *Trilce*. "Strangle eloquence!" the French poet had advised, and his Peruvian disciple did so with a vengeance, throttling Spanish in pursuit of what Verlaine called "the gray verses where the Imprecise and the Precise mingle ... the vague Uneven, / the Uneven free in space."

Poem 36 of *Trilce*, a reflection on the Venus de Milo, is a new vision of that "Uneven." Its last two lines reflect Vallejo's confidence that he has gone beyond his master: "Make way for the new odd number! / potent with orphanhood." Like the rest of *Trilce*, Poem 36 is a poetics of oddity and orphanhood. It suggests that poetic truth resides in imminence and incompletion, that to discover it we must "refuse to set foot on the double security of Harmony." Like García Lorca, Vallejo gazed beyond presence into absence, and turned his entire oeuvre into elegy. What strikes him about the Venus de Milo, for example, is the "imminence" of her absent arms. "You hardly act armless, swarming / bellied in the plenary arms of existence / of this existence that is still yetting perennial imperfection." The "increate arm" of the Venus swings round and "bends its elbow / through greening stuttering pebbles, / ortive nautili, *yets* that have just begun to crawl, / deathless nights-before" (my translation). The armless Venus is the poem and also the poet: a "lassoer of imminences, lassoer / of the parenthesis" (Eshleman).

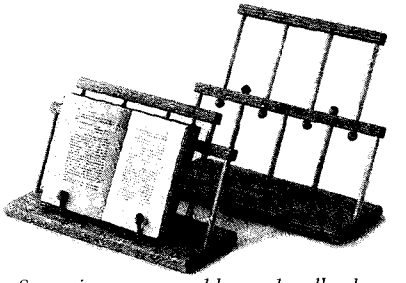
Imminence and absence are at the heart of *Trilce*, whose most memorable poems concern art, abandonment and sex. No Spanish or Latin American poet has written so pungently, with such dark humor, about the last. It is "the circuit between our poor day and the great night." Vallejo's startling metaphors for "the ruttiest of jousts," the "leap through the needle's eye," the "thunder" of orgasm make the reader more conscious of its mystery. Vallejo's "suggestive, vague" way of naming places sex beyond language, returning it to the realm of the unspeakable. Here, too, is imminence and expectancy. An "exergue's wand" nods and gestures toward "the two Tomes of the Work," the "tender fleshbud of desire," the song of desire's "lower lips."

"I think about your sex," Vallejo writes in Poem 13, a text that evokes masturbation. "My heart simplified, I think about your sex, / before the ripe daughterloin of day. / I touch the bud of joy, it is in season. / And an ancient sentiment dies / degenerated into brains. // I think about your sex, furrow more prolific / and harmonious than the belly of the Shadow, / though Death conceives and bears / from God himself" (Eshleman). For the most part, sex reminds Vallejo of death, and the "lower lips of desire" sing very darkly. In an empty corner where he slept with his beloved, the poet remembers sex as: "Two doors [that] are opening closing, / two doors that come and go in the wind / shadow to shadow" (my translation).

The uneven "I" of *Trilce*, the "new odd number," is a subject orphaned of his loves, his childhood, his parents, his siblings, his home. One of his favorite personae is that of a bewildered child, left to himself, and one recurrent image of his orphanhood is that of eating alone: "I've had lunch alone now, and without any / mother ... And the knives on this table / have hurt me all over my palate" (Eshleman). Why, the poet asks, must life charge us so dearly for the bread of happiness we ate as children? The unanswerable question is put to his dead mother, "radiant bakery," "tender confectioner of love," whose "very bones must now be flour." Why must we pay so dearly for what was received in innocence? "We couldn't have snatched it from anyone, when you gave it to us, / no, mama?"

Those verses are radiantly clear. Oth-

Higher Reading



Sometimes you read heavy hardbacks, sometimes little paperbacks. Sometimes you read magazines, sometimes newspapers. And sometimes you need to hold copy next to your computer. That's why we invented our new telescoping oak bookstand. The back elevates from 7½" to 11½" high. Move the ball-topped wooden pegs on the base to different holes to adjust the reading angle and keep the pages back. The base measures 5½" by 14". Made in America of native oak.

$39.95 + **$5.95** shipping
Two for **$34.95** each + **$7.95** shipping
MC/VISA/AMEX/DI/Check • Florida add 6%
Money-Back Guarantee • Catalog on Request
800-544-0880 or 407-276-4141

LEVENGER®
TOOLS FOR SERIOUS READERS
975 S. Congress Ave., Code NRTB8, Delray, FL 33445

Want to brush up on a foreign language?

With Audio-Forum's intermediate and advanced materials, it's easy to maintain and sharpen your foreign-language skills.

Besides intermediate and advanced audio-cassette courses — most developed for the U.S. State Department — we offer foreign-language mystery dramas, dialogs recorded in Paris, games, music, and many other helpful materials. And if you want to learn a new language, we have beginning courses for adults and for children.

We offer introductory and advanced materials in most of the world's languages: French, German, Spanish, Italian, Japanese, Mandarin, Greek, Russian, Arabic, Korean, and others. 230 courses in 79 languages. Our 21st year.

For FREE 52-page catalog call 1-800-662-5180 or write to:

AUDIO-FORUM®
Room K744, 96 Broad Street,
Guilford, CT 06437 (203) 453-9794

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ers are simply impenetrable. Here is Eshleman's rendering of the first stanza of poem 25: "Thrips uprear to adhere / to joints, to the base, to napes, / to the underface of numerators on foot. / Thrips and thrums from lupine heaps." Seiferle translates: "Bishops arise to adhere to / the joints, the depths, the crowns, / the underbed of numerators on foot. / Bishops and cockleburs of wolfish harvests." What "wolfish harvests" Vallejo is talking about is anyone's guess.

Why read, why translate poetry as obscure as this? Because meaning seems imminent. The clearer poems persuade us that for Vallejo obscurity is not an end in itself. His darkness is neither the defiant babble of the avant-garde nor the woozyness (Auden's term) of someone who writes much and publishes little. When Vallejo disarticulates Spanish he does so not out of nihilism and not out of complacency with his own strangeness, but because he has certain moral and aesthetic truths to express, and must utter them in an idiom of his own making. This, too, is part of his symbolist heritage, and a figure of his pride and loneliness: "No one / knows of my succulent snack of unity: / the legion of obscurities, the amazons of crying" (Eshleman). Vallejo's deepest political impact lies here, in his re-creation of linguistic, and therefore social, order.

Thrips and thrums, bishops and cockleburs. No lines better illustrate the misery and splendor of translating Vallejo. Heir to the innovations of Mallarmé and Apollinaire, and those of the Hispanic movement called *ultraismo* (ultraism, a spinoff of Italian futurism), Vallejo played expressively with spelling, with visual symbolism (1=penis, 0=vagina) and with the spatial arrangement of the text. These are features that Eshleman tries hard to preserve. The problem is that, even in his ordinary, everyday prose, in his letters, Vallejo's spelling and punctuation were unacademic, and it is not always clear when his deviances are deliberate. Misspellings and misprints crept into the Peruvian and Spanish editions of *Trilce* (as they have into Ortega's), and what Eshleman is laboring to preserve are often meaningless errata and variants. Why should *acojidas* (a common variant of *acogidas*) be turned into "welkoming," *cojido* (rather than *cogida*) into "kaught," and the misspelling *fasistol* into "lektern"? The letter killeth. And distracteth.

Trilce abounds in neologisms, and Eshleman ushers a number of funky new verbs into English: to transasfixiate, ammoniafy, splendor, ennazal, horizonify, giraft. In order to "bring the English up to Vallejo's performance level in Spanish," he finds rare and "archaic English words to match" their supposedly archaic equivalents. He yearns to discover the slightest trace of verbal idiosyncrasy, to "translate everything" and to record the problem and the solution in a note. *Bromuro* means "bromide," and Vallejo speaks of "declives bromurados," which means, literally, "bromided slopes." Picking a quarrel with the obvious, Eshleman spies the word *muro* (wall) in *bromuro* and comes up with "bromowalled slopes."

Seiferle, too, has thought about Vallejo's stylistic peculiarities. In her introduction, she points out that he "almost reinvents Spanish by using neologisms and puns, incorrect orthography and grammatical constructions ... verbs

Custard of the Pawpaw

We walked the Chattahoochee, the river
a red mud and the bank a tunnel of steam.
The last bright Sunday rubber rafts
poised like the last pictured rocks the Creek
saw there. The scarlet and white oak, buckeye
and spruce drooped in the heat and we walked
into exhaustion, the inexhaustible fireflies beginning
their cold dance. And we saw
signaling to us the separate rhythms
of their attraction, nearly all
the energy converted to light.

Long ago they filled the darkness
like a host of stars descended
from heaven. No, it was the other
way around, I was in the very midst
of heaven, risen to be with angels.
I was with a different man then.
He wanted me and I didn't him
and it was as if my head had been brought
to the very top of the Lord's tent.

That kind of burden makes you happy and mean.
While we plunged through the murky air
I learned so many punishments for my wants,
for example, simply, feeling them,
or knowing wanting so much
that what we do to avoid filling it
becomes the filling it.
What beautiful cardinals in the cathedral
of that vegetation, you said. How bright
the red ones flew, little evening emblems,
and how quickly the brown ones came to your hand.

But you went on, how I wanted things
the way a man wants them and so would not have power
the way a woman has power. But I have no power
the way a man has power. Oh what vegetation lived
there, on the banks of that river, the silverbell
and sweetgum, sycamore and chinquapin.
And the pawpaw tree, its fruit always eaten
by scavengers, saying had you been in time,
had you been neither too early or, now, too late,
oh what a wonderful custard I'd have given you.

JUDITH BAUMEL

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

without subjects, pronouns without referents." Without realizing it, however, Seiferle shows similar powers of reinvention. She turns intransitive verbs into transitives, actives into passives, subjunctives into indicatives. She puzzles over leftover pronouns and particles, and produces some harmless but "incorrect orthography" of her own ("lead" for "led"). She affirms that "this astonishing book" is "not unlike the accretion of . . . guano islands," and those words are applicable also to her own unvetted labors.

Her introduction and her notes are colored by a recent reading of *The Incredible Incas and Their Timeless Land*, some nosing around in the *VOX New College Spanish and English Dictionary* and an unshakable belief in Vallejo's ethnic alienation: "It was Vallejo's Spanish and his shoes (Indians went barefoot or in sandals) that made him a human being in Peru." Convinced of Vallejo's indebtedness to Incaic and Peruvian popular culture, she reads one of his metaphors for the heat of sexual desire ("picadura de ají vagaroso," the bite, or prickle, of vagrant chili) as an allusion to St. Rose of Lima, who "painted her face with chili pepper so that the sores would drive away any suitor."

Almost every poem touches off some sort of metamorphosis. Vallejo's "el justo medio" (the golden mean) turns into "the average just man," Lima's rainshine (*chirapa*) into a fluke (*chiripa*) and *cangrejos* (crabs or rogues) into an inexplicable injunction to "Sail . . . !" Describing a very hot day, Vallejo writes colloquially that the sun "le alborota los cascos / al mas frio" (addles the brains / of even the coldest person). Seiferle translates "excites hooves / toward the coldest." To burn one's bridges is *quemar las naves* in everyday Spanish. Seiferle renders it as "to burn naves." (In Peruvian cathedrals?)

Trilce, as Ferrari remarks, is "an obsession and a nightmare" for any translator. No translation, no reading of its "hard crystal," will ever be adequate. And yet Vallejo's idea of imminence turns even inadequate translation into an act of homage. A house, Vallejo once wrote, is never truly empty until someone has lived there. In their resistance to translation and their stubborn refusal to yield meaning, Vallejo's poems are like empty houses. Without always knowing what they are about, the reader—and the translator—know that meaning has resided there, and will again.

CHRISTOPHER MAURER is chair of the department of Spanish and Portugese at Vanderbilt University.

Sex in the Head

BY SAMUEL HYNES

Ottoline Morrell: Life on the Grand Scale by Miranda Seymour

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 452 pp., $30)

For most of us, Lady Ottoline Morrell already has a bright caricature existence. We know her as a tall, eccentric woman in oddly colored clothes, drifting through a country house garden talking vaguely of Art and the Soul. We have met her as Hermione Roddice in D. H. Lawrence's *Women in Love*, and as Priscilla Wimbush in Aldous Huxley's *Crome Yellow*, and as herself in Virginia Woolf's diaries, "brilliantly painted, as garish as a strumpet," and in Augustus John's portrait, as a long-nosed, lantern-jawed, wild-eyed woman with a hat like a black-velvet bolster. Everyone who described her used extravagant terms. To Henry James she was like "some gorgeous heraldic creature—a Gryphon perhaps or a Dragon Volant." Virginia Woolf thought she had the head of a Medusa. Leonard Woolf saw her as like an enormous bird. Others compared her to paintings: a Van Dyke, a Velázquez, a Gainsborough. Nobody thought she was ordinary.

Though she moved among painters and writers, she was not an artist herself, at least not in the usual sense: she didn't paint, she wrote feelingly but badly, and she wasn't even much good as a garden photographer. She had social position, but it was somewhat ambiguous: she was only the *half*-sister of a duke. She had some money, but not a lot; she was not well-educated; she was not clever. Yet she managed to create three things that stand out vividly in the cultural history of England in her time. First, she created the extraordinary persona of Lady Ottoline: more splendid than the figures around her, draped and shawled and hatted and parasoled like a character in some romantic costume drama, with a voice that rose and fell like exotic music, and a way of walking that was like a Spanish galleon under weigh.

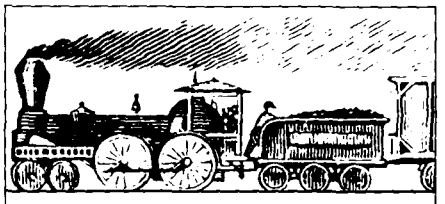
David Cecil first saw her in the High Street in Oxford while he was still an undergraduate:

> Then, sailing slowly through the crowd, which made way for her with much staring and whispering, a figure caught my eye—stately, upright, very tall and clad in a dress of canary-colored silk, shaped closely to her bosom and waist, and then spreading out in long full skirts that swept the pavement. On her rust-colored hair she wore a wide-brimmed hat of royal blue trimmed with curling ostrich feathers also of royal blue. She moved with heavily powdered countenance raised a little up, as if lost in some brooding dream, and oblivious of the stir she was creating. "It is Lady Ottoline Morrell," said a voice near me.

She was a spectacular personality, and she made her life a spectacle. For that theatrical life she created a splendid stage-setting—Garsington Manor, her second achievement, the Oxfordshire country house in which she lived with her husband, Philip Morrell, and a large cast of guests from the beginning of the Great War until the end of the '20s. Garsington, when she acquired it, was a decaying Jacobean manor house with primitive plumbing and an overgrown garden. She turned it into a place of great, serene beauty. (The plumbing didn't improve much: it was said that the Morrells, faced with the choice between another garden statue and another bathroom, always chose the statue.)

Her third creation was the salon that she made there. Literary memoirs make Garsington sound like a sort of rest home for Bloomsbury intellectuals, and many of them clearly thought of it that way, coming down for a visit when they felt like it, and then going away to ridicule their hostess. "I think it's beastly of them," said Dora Carrington, "to enjoy Ottoline's kindnesses and then laugh at her." She was right, it was beastly; but they all did it. Miranda Seymour reports these visits, and the behavior of the visitors, with an admirable tartness. I am pleased to find her confirming my own sense of who was decent and who was awful in that mixed bag of first-rate and second-rate people. Frieda Lawrence was the worst, an arrogant German bully (we knew that, didn't we?). Clive Bell was malicious, and so was Middleton Murry. Lytton Strachey was a bitchy gossip. Bertrand Russell was egotistical. Katherine Mansfield was a hyp-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



MOVING?

Don't forget to let us know so you won't miss a single issue of **THE NEW REPUBLIC.**

Just attach your old address label in the first space provided and write your new address in the second space reserved below.

Old Address (Affix label from this issue.)

Name

Address

City State Zip

New Address

Name

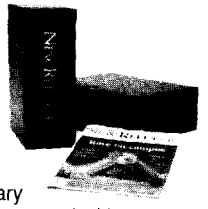
Address

City State Zip

Mail to:
THE NEW REPUBLIC
PO Box 602
Mt. Morris, IL 61054

Allow 4-6 weeks for change of address to go into effect.

PROTECT YOUR COPIES OF THE NEW REPUBLIC



These custom-made titled cases are ideal to protect your valuable copies of *The New Republic* from damage. They're designed to hold a year's issues (may vary with issue sizes), constructed with reinforced board, and covered with durable leather-like material in flag blue. Title is hot-stamped in silver and cases are V-notched for easy access.

1–$7.95 3–$21.95 6–$39.95

The New Republic
Jesse Jones Industries, Dept. TNR
499 East Erie Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19134

Enclosed is $_____ for ____cases. Add $1.00 per case for postage and handling. Outside USA $2.50 per case (US funds only). PA residents add 7% sales tax.

Print
Name _____
Address _____
No P.O. Box Numbers Please
City _____
State/Zip _____

CHARGE ORDERS (Minimum $15): AmEx, Visa, MC, DC accepted. Send card name, #, Exp. date.
Call Toll Free 7 days, 24 hrs,1-800-825-6690.

ocrite. The ones who come out best are Woolf, Keynes, and Desmond and Molly McCarthy (though even they couldn't resist a bit of gossip and a giggle at Ottoline's expense).

Garsington, however, was not all Bloomsbury. Ottoline gathered all kinds of people there: peers and politicians, writers and artists, the talented and the untalented, the rich and the poor, the honest and the shifty. There, on any weekend, you might meet Herbert and Margot Asquith, or Yeats, or Eliot and his wife Vivien, or Augustus John or Huxley. Oxford undergraduates came out for the day—Henry Green was there, and Anthony Powell. Down in the cowshed Mark Gertler might be painting a picture, while Carrington bathed in the pond.

It sounds like an endless house party; but Garsington was more than that. It was a place where the young were introduced to their elders, the obscure to the famous, artists to patrons. If the artists were homeless (as the Lawrences frequently were), Ottoline sheltered them; if they were broke, she gave them money. She bought their pictures and their books, and she listened to their troubles. She was a friend, and her house was a refuge.

In her own imagination, of course, it was more than that: less like a rest home and more like the Court of Urbino. Sometime during her early years there she wrote a sort of Garsington Manifesto, in which she said:

> Come then, gather here—all who have passion and who desire to create new conditions of life—new visions of art and literature and new magic worlds of poetry and music. If I could but feel that days at Garsington had strengthened your efforts to live a noble life: to live freely, recklessly, with clear Reason released from convention—no longer absorbed in small personal events but valuing personal affairs as part of a great whole—above all to live with passionate desire for Truth and Love and Understanding and Imagination.

What can one say about a woman who would dream up such a document? That she was naive, romantic, high-minded and a little foolish; that she was issuing an open invitation to all the intellectual fakes and freeloaders in England to come and exploit her, which they did. And yet the whole thing is filled with a generosity of spirit that is extraordinary and touching.

During the First World War Garsington took on another role: it became a refuge for conscientious objectors. They flocked out from London—Clive Bell, David Garnett, Duncan Grant and others—to do alternative service on the land, and to hamper Philip Morrell's efforts to run a profitable farm. Other opponents of the war came too: Russell, and Siegfried Sassoon (who planned his "Soldier's Declaration" against the war there), and Miles Malleson, the anti-war playwright, and Ramsay MacDonald. More than any other place, Garsington was the center of the English opposition to the war, a focus of individual courage.

A good deal of that courage must have come from Philip Morrell. Seymour portrays him as a weak, unstable nonentity, and he may have seemed that in the company of his flamboyant wife. But in the House of Commons, where he was an M.P. during the war years, he was a different person, and an admirable one, as Seymour would have discovered if she had spent a little time reading the parliamentary debates of those years in *Hansard*.

On August 3, 1914, Morrell rose to oppose England's declaration of war, and to remind his fellow members that they would be going to war just as much to preserve Russian despotism as to impede German ambition. Once the war had begun, he devoted himself to the well-being of the troops, and to the rights of conscientious objectors. He spoke up for the right of individuals to express their anti-war opinions, and as the war neared its end he argued for a redefinition of the Allied war aims, to restore the idealism of 1914 and to suppress the vengeance of 1918. His record, over those four war years, is a brave and independent one, conducted in near isolation, against fierce government hostility. A weak, unstable man could not have done it.

He did have his troubles, to be sure. There was a crisis in his private life in 1917, when he found himself with two mistresses, both of them pregnant. But though this deplorable situation suggests bad judgment, and perhaps an imperfect understanding of the practice of contraception, it does not indicate mental instability.

Perhaps Morrell philandered because his wife had turned from him, and had taken a series of lovers. Ottoline had always fancied the company of distinguished men, and over the years she was involved with a good many such men. Her habit of attachment began before her marriage, with a number of older men: the archbishop of York, Herbert Asquith and a London professor named Cramb. At this stage in her life—she was in her early 20s—Ottoline was not a lover but a mentor-collector. It is a type that teachers and clergymen will recognize: she desired knowledge, and was drawn to men who seemed to possess it. They, in turn, were flattered by the attentions of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

such a striking young woman, and thought that perhaps something more than admiration was being offered. Asquith and Cramb made advances, and were rebuffed. The archbishop, I'm glad to say, restrained himself.

Ottoline's first real love affair was with the doctor-writer Axel Munthe. She was 24, unmarried and footloose in Italy; he was 40, an attentive lover until her religious intensity frightened him off. Later, after her marriage, there were others: the painters Augustus John and Henry Lamb, perhaps Roger Fry and—most scandalously and explosively, of course—Bertrand Russell. In none of these affairs does Ottoline's primary motive seem to have been sexual. Seymour tells us, in the saddest sentence in the book, that "Ottoline did not have any real enthusiasm for sex." She was simply mentor-collecting with a difference.

Ottoline never explained what she was doing, but there is an interesting theoretical account of this sort of sex-in-the-head in the journal of another extraordinary woman of the time, Beatrice Webb. "Friendship," she wrote,

> between particular men and women has an enormous educational value to both (especially to the woman). Such a friendship is practically impossible (or, at any rate, impossible between persons who are attractive to each other—and, therefore, most remunerative as friends) without physical intimacy; you do not, as a matter of fact, get to know any man thoroughly except as his beloved and his lover—if you could have been the beloved of the dozen ablest men you have known it would have greatly extended your knowledge of human nature and human affairs.

But, she added, "there remains the question whether, with all the perturbations caused by such intimacies, you would have any brain left to think with?"

Beatrice Webb never put her theory into practice; Ottoline Morrell did. Not with a dozen men, but with at least half a dozen, and for the same reason: she fell in love with their minds. She talked religion with the archbishop, French poetry with Cramb, art with John, philosophy with Russell. With some she also made love, but unenthusiastically. Of her feelings for Russell, who was the great love of her life, she wrote in her memoirs: "For many years I had thought of him as the greatest intellect living, and a very important and wonderful man." But she added: "To my shame, however much I was thrilled with the beauty and transcendence of his thought, I could hardly bear the lack of physical attraction." Poor Russell. Poor Ottoline.

Seymour goes on at some length about the men in Ottoline's life; but I wonder if they are really of great importance, except as symptoms of her appetite for art and for thought. She was not a courtesan, after all; she was a hostess, a patron, a friend. Maybe, as Webb suggested, sex was the only available route to what she desired; but it was not the journey that impelled her.

If the story of her love life is full and detailed, that is partly because she confided unwisely in her friends, who turned it into Bloomsbury gossip, and partly because she wrote too many letters, which survive in surprising quantities. If she hadn't written 1,500 letters to Russell (which he kept), if Russell hadn't written 2,500 letters to her (which she kept), this biography would be shorter, and better balanced. And what would we have lost? Only the assignations and the heavy breathing: not the essential Ottoline.

Who, then, was she? There is an acute answer to that question in a letter from Lawrence to Ottoline, written near the end of his life, in 1928. By then Ottoline had given up Garsington and moved to a modest house in London, where she underwent an operation for cancer of the jaw that left her face disfigured. In her depression she wrote to her old friend (and sometimes enemy) for comfort; and Lawrence replied:

> Don't say you feel you're not important in life. You've been an important influence in lots of lives, as you have in mine; through being fundamentally generous, and through being Ottoline. After all, there's only one Ottoline. And she has moved one's imagination.... Ottoline has moved men's imaginations deeply, and that's perhaps the most a woman can do. And in the world today, full of women, how rare to find one that can move the imagination!

It is a very Lawrentian sort of comforting—patronizing, self-centered, but very kind and very perceptive.

Ottoline Morrell lived for another decade, less splendidly, deaf and ailing, but still Ottoline, still entertaining, still dressing like no one else, still extravagant and affectionate. It was during these last years that her friendship with Virginia Woolf grew close, and when she died it was Woolf who wrote the obituary for the *Times*. It is a touching piece, full of praise for Ottoline's originality and courage, her humility, generosity and sincerity, with fond memories of her strange, exotic appearance, the stir she made simply by walking down a street, "like a Renaissance princess listening to inaudible music while the passers-by stared." Like Lawrence's letter, it is a celebration of Ottoline simply for being herself.

To tell the story of such a woman, a great lady who, as Woolf put it, created her own world, seems a straightforward enough task: you simply write the kind of biography that critics say is replacing the novel, a lively narrative with a beginning, a middle and an end, and some reversals and revelations along the way. You don't have to make the life illuminate the works, or reveal the social dynamics of the culture or the spirit of the time; you just have to tell it. Miranda Seymour has done that, and done it well. One of her virtues is her sturdy partisanship: from the first page it is clear that Ottoline is not only the subject of this book, she is also its romantic heroine, and Seymour will be loyal to her, in spite of the follies and the ridicule. This seems to me the right posture for a biographer, at least in this case; it is better, certainly, than the pretense of a bloodless objectivity. The job here is to rescue Ottoline from Bloomsbury gossip and triviality, and to restore her eccentric splendor.

SAMUEL HYNES is the author most recently of *A War Imagined: The First World War and English Culture* (Collier Books).

If You Agree With Robert Hutchins...

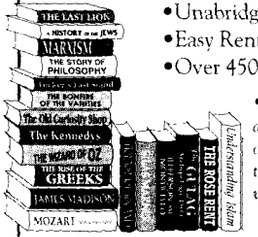
"...knowledge without wisdom has brought us to the edge of destruction and may at any time push us over the brink."

Contact: *The Wisdom Society*

P.O. Box 4126-N, San Marcos, CA 92069
Phone(619)931-9834 Fax(619)727-9489

OLD TYME Rubber Stamps
SKADS of Designs!
Utterly Divine Catalogue $1 Refundable
GOOD IMPRESSIONS, P.O. Box 33.N1 Shirley, WV 26434-0033

AUDIO BOOKS



- Unabridged Recordings
- Easy Rentals by Mail
- Over 450 Great Titles

"I go through a book a week using time otherwise wasted in taxis, shaving or walking"
—George F. Will

BLACKSTONE AUDIO BOOKS
P.O. Box 969, Ashland OR 97520
For a **FREE** Catalogue Call:
1-800-729-2665

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WASHINGTON DIARIST

Quantity time

FATHERHOOD ISN'T BRAIN SURgery. I say this in defiance of the new conventional wisdom that being a father is breathtakingly difficult, that it creates tough dilemmas and causes enormous stress and that fathers need a strategy, a plan, a vision, for carrying out their duties. I don't think so. Most men I know have an instinct for fatherhood that was triggered the day their first child was born. They instantly recognized the No. 1 requirement of fatherhood: be there. Woody Allen may be a lousy father, but his rule for life applies to being a father. Yep, 90 percent of fatherhood is just showing up. Of course, millions of fathers don't show up at all because of divorce, out-of-wedlock births, etc. And the absence of fathers has awful consequences. But that's a social problem, quite different from the personal crisis fathers supposedly face in their day-to-day interaction with their children.

FORGET QUALITY TIME. YOU CAN'T plan magic moments or bonding or epiphanies in dealing with kids. What matters is quantity time. Judging from my own experience—four kids—children crave prolonged attention, preferably undivided. They want whole days and nights of it. Knowing this, I opted for an adventure in quantity time with my son, Freddy, in mid-June. He's 8. I took him with me for a weekend at The Balsams, an elegant old resort hotel in Dixville Notch, New Hampshire. All I had to do was give a speech Saturday morning (I was a last-minute substitute for David Gergen) to a group of Maine and Vermont bankers and their spouses. The rest of my time was Freddy's. The only dilemma I faced was figuring out what to do with him while I spoke. He's about as eager to listen to me hold forth on politics as President Clinton is to hear another question from Brit Hume. Since Freddy refused to participate in the hotel's program for kids, there was only one solution. I paid him off. I gave him $10 in quarters, hoping that would keep him busy for ninety minutes playing video games. It worked only too well. When I came to get him later, he'd spent the money and was playing pool with an older kid named Zack. "Dad," he said, "what'd you come so soon for?"

I HAD NO STRATEGY FOR HOW we'd spend our time or what we'd talk about. We would play it by ear, by instinct. The hotel is situated beside a lake stocked with trout, so fishing seemed logical. "We're men, aren't we?" Freddy said. We got life jackets, a rowboat, oars and two fly rods, and headed for the middle of the lake. I rowed, and Freddy accused me of splashing him as I rowed. Sad to say, my knowledge of fly fishing consisted of having seen the movie *A River Runs through It*, and that turned out to be insufficient. Fly fishing, like golf, is hard. By the time we'd casted a few times, the boat had floated back to the shore, and I had to stop fishing and row again. This process repeated itself a few times. After a half-hour, Freddy said, "Dad, we'll never catch a fish." I told him he was wrong, that if we stuck to it for a while more, we'd catch something. He was right. The fishing episode produced no moments of deep father-son rapport, only a shared sense of relief that the two young women who were fly fishing at the same time didn't catch anything either.

BASKETBALL WAS BETTER. FREDDY showed me everything he'd learned earlier that week at basketball camp. We pretended to be the Bulls and the Suns. Hiking was better still. When we returned, it was time for dinner. Freddy and I were signed up to attend the bankers' formal banquet. I was worried that he would be bored and bad. Instead, I experienced two of the blessings of fatherhood (these apply also to motherhood). One is that people are unusually nice when you're with your children. When Freddy balked at prime rib, the waitress brought him a burger and fries. The other joy is when your kid unexpectedly displays his best behavior in public. Freddy acted like Little Lord Fauntleroy. He sat still, responded to everyone who talked to him, didn't once call anyone a "butthead," his favorite epithet. He got restless after roughly an hour. So I gave him $3 to play video games.

DURING THE WEEKEND, I MANaged to resolve what *Time*, in its June 28 cover story ("Fatherhood: The guilt, the joy, the fear, the fun . . . "), suggests are the two great dilemmas of modern fatherhood. You know, choosing between work and family and deciding whether to be a New Father or an Old Father. This was no big deal. In fact, it's a false choice, one most fathers don't really have to make. The weekend itself combined work and family. Nothing extraordinary there. Fathers balance work and family all the time. You go to work, but if your child is doing something eventful, or needs your immediate help, then you take off. (Those, that is, who have the luxury of skipping out of work when they choose.) You never get credit for being there with your kid. But you get blame—and suffer remorse—if you aren't. Only once have I ever been forced to make a conscious choice between work and family. It occurred when my daughter Grace had a weekday soccer game and her mother was away. I thought: I have so much to do I can't leave work at 4 p.m. But I did. Grace scored four goals, her best game ever.

AS FOR NEW FATHERhood—more nurturing and soft-edged, less rigid and aloof—you don't have to embrace it or reject it. You adopt the parts you're comfortable with and forget the rest. I never believed I'd find it thrilling to be in the delivery room to see my child being born. I was wrong. *Time* says that "it is still the mother who carries her child's life around in her head." Like many fathers, I try to keep track of what my kids are doing every day. But I can't be a second mother to them. Men, my friends anyway, aren't good at that. Robert Griswold, in *Fatherhood in America*, complains that American culture "lacks any coherent and unified vision of what fathers and fatherhood should be." He's right, but so what? That's a problem of our culture and its need to put a theory behind things that work in practice. Fathers get along fine without such a vision.

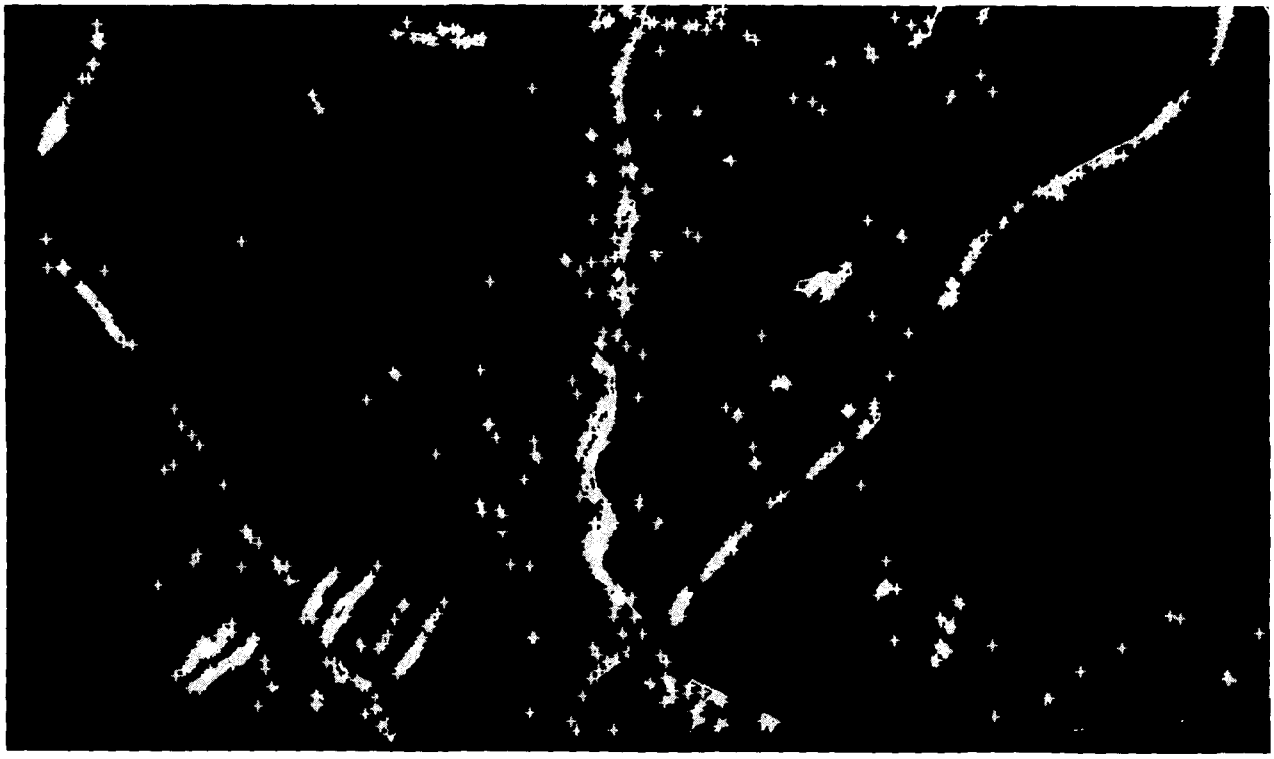
AS THE BANQUET WAS ENDING, Freddy returned from the game room, ready for attention. We went outside to reconnoiter the eighteen-hole putting green, where we intended to play the next morning. The sky was amazingly clear, the stars glistening like they never do through the haze over Washington. A couple from Camden, Maine, spent thirty minutes talking to Freddy and me. The wife took Freddy aside and pointed out the Big Dipper to him. He was ecstatic. "I couldn't see it before," he said. The husband talked about other wonders in the sky. Freddy was enthralled. As we walked back to our room, he said, "That man really knew a lot." It was 10 p.m., time for bed. Freddy jumped under the covers and insisted we sleep in the same bed. "Dad, dad, there's so much I want to tell you," he said Before he could remember exactly what he was fast asleep.

FRED BARNE

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A tank, jeep, troop transport–if it moves on the ground, we can see it without risking the lives of our ground troops. Joint STARS, a nonintrusive surveillance system, gave battle commanders in Operation Desert Storm a whole new way to look at conflict. It proved to be the most significant system of its kind. Much more than a simple magic box or breakthrough technology, it's the hard won product of nearly 50 years of electronic monitoring research.

A PICTURE IS WORTH



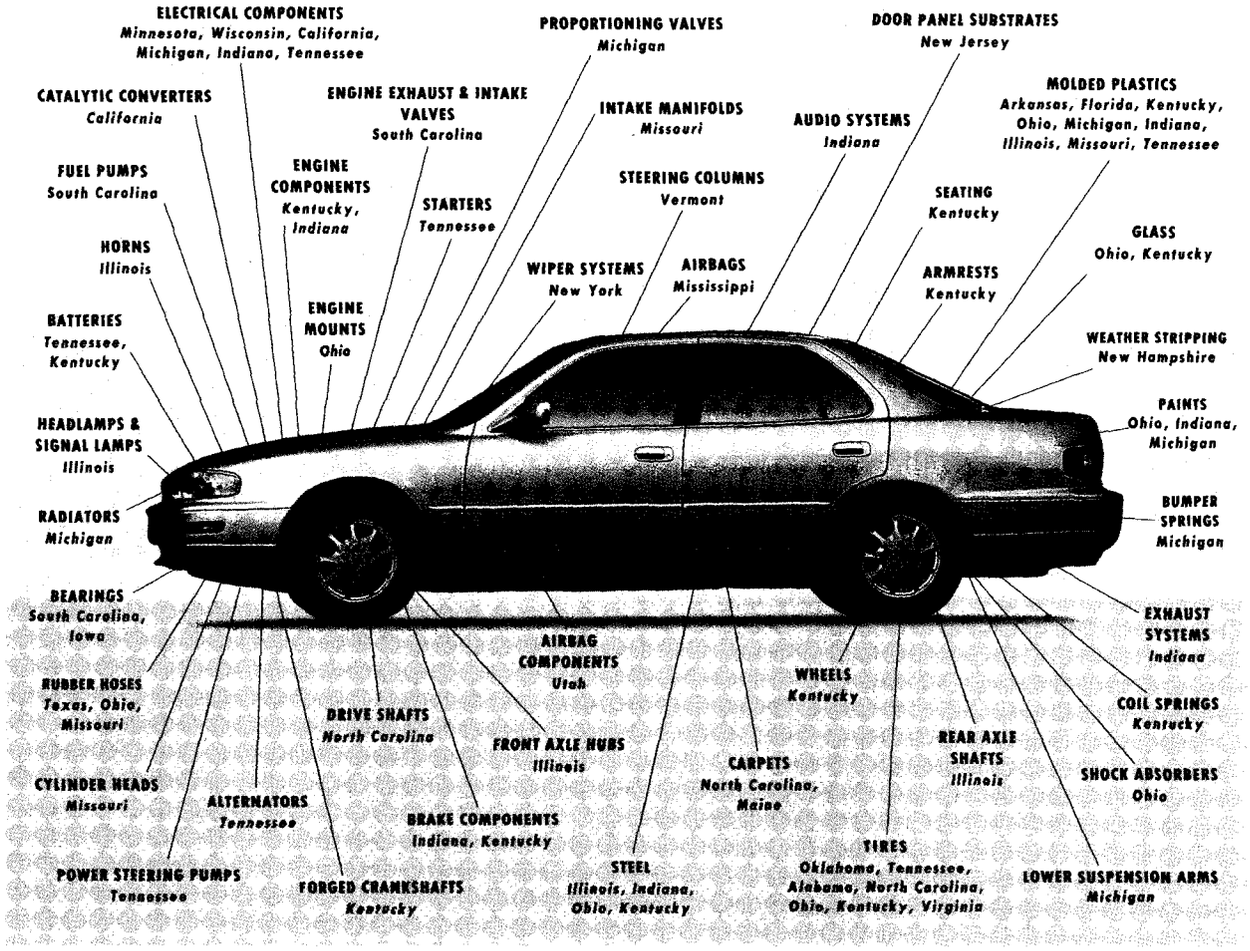
A THOUSAND TROOPS.

Pressed into service six years ahead of schedule, Joint STARS is proof that Grumman systems integration–software, hardware, and imaginative thinking–provide real solutions for real problems. Today, the demand for faster, better, and more affordable information is growing. That's a target more elusive than any tank, truck or mobile missile launcher. Fortunately, Grumman has it in its sights. **Technologies that make sense today.**

GRUMMAN®

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WE BUY THE BEST PARTS in the world,



© 1993 Toyota Motor Corporate Services of North America, Inc.

no matter WHICH STATE THEY'RE FROM.

EVERY Camry manufactured at our $2 billion Georgetown, Kentucky plant is made with U.S. parts purchased from 174 of our over 390 American suppliers. At Toyota we're committed to investing in the economies where we do business. That's why, since 1988, we've increased our purchasing of U.S. made parts by 357% to over $4 billion per year. *INVESTING IN THE THINGS WE ALL CARE ABOUT.* **TOYOTA**

For information on Toyota in America write Toyota Motor Corporate Services, 9 West 57th Street, Suite 4900, New York, NY 10019.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED